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HIGH-LEVEL TRIP

Jaishankar to begin six-day U.S. visit today

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CHANGE IN RULES

Centre scraps 'no detention' policy for Classes 5, 8

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NETANYAHU SPEAKS

'Some progress made on Gaza hostage deal'

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Denial of visas for Indians in Australia

It is linked to fraud, not housing crisis

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CAUSING A FLUTTER

Raghu stuns Sathish, meets Mithun in final

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NEARBY

₹9,823.31 crore investment projects get nod

BENGALURU
The 64th meeting of the State High-Level Clearance Committee chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday approved nine industrial projects with a total investment of ₹9,823.31 crore.
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Tight security in place for NYE celebrations

BENGALURU
Home Minister G. Parameshwara chaired a review meeting on Monday to discuss preparations for New Year's Eve celebrations on M.G. Road. He said elaborate security arrangements had been made for the upcoming festivities. » PAGE 2

Three suspected Khalistan operatives shot dead in U.P.

The deceased were involved in a grenade attack at Bakshiwala in Punjab on Dec. 18, say police; Punjab DGP calls encounter a 'breakthrough' against terror module sponsored by Pakistan's ISI

Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

Three pro-Khalistan operatives linked to a recent grenade attack in Punjab were killed in an encounter in Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh, the police said.

The three men killed in the joint operation by Uttar Pradesh and Punjab police personnel were identified as Gurvinder Singh, 25; Varinder Singh, 23; and Jasanpreet Singh, 18. All were residents of Gurdaspur in Punjab.

Gaurav Yadav, Director-General of Police, Punjab, said the encounter was a breakthrough against the "Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF) terror module" sponsored by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The deceased were involved in a grenade attack at a police post in Bakshiwala in Gurdaspur on December 18, he added.

"The KZF had claimed responsibility for the act," Mr. Yadav said.

"Following reliable inputs that the accused had fled to Uttar Pradesh, a joint operation was launched. When confronted, the accused opened fire at the police party, prompting retaliation. In the exchange of fire, the trio sustained bullet injuries and were rushed for medical treatment," Deputy Inspector-General of Police (Border Range), Satinder Singh of the Punjab Police, said. The police recovered two AK-47 rifles and two 9mm Glock pistols from their possession.

Terror trail: Police personnel and others at a hospital after the encounter in Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh on Monday. PTI

'British man linked'

The police also suspect the mastermind of the Bakshiwala attack to be a British Army man.

"Jagjeet Singh, reportedly working in British Army and having assumed the identity of Fateh Singh Baghi, also claimed responsibility for the grenade attack," officials said.

On December 18, unidentified men who arrived in an autorickshaw had thrown hand grenades and bombs at the Bakshiwala police post. The KZF took responsibility for the attack in a social media post.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Bangladesh writes to India seeking Hasina's extradition

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Bangladesh has sent India a *note verbale* seeking the extradition of its deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the adviser on foreign affairs to the interim government Touhid Hossein informed the media in Dhaka on Monday.

The confirmation came hours after Lieutenant-General Mohammad Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (retd.), adviser on home affairs, informed that the interim Bangladesh government has written to the Government of India seeking the extradition of Ms. Hasina. The Ministry of External Affairs confirmed receiving the request.

"We have sent a letter to the Foreign Ministry seeking repatriation of Sheikh Hasina. The matter is being processed. We have an extradition treaty with India," he told presspersons in Dhaka.

Sheikh Hasina

Following the communication from Bangladesh, official spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal said, "We confirm that we have received a *note verbale* from the Bangladesh High Commission today in connection with an extradition request. At this time, we have no comment to offer on this matter."

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Benegal, giant of Indian cinema, bids farewell at 90

Shilajit Mitra
MUMBAI

Filmmaker Shyam Benegal, a giant of Indian cinema and one of the guiding lights of the parallel cinema movement, passed away due to kidney-related ailments in Mumbai on Monday. He was 90.

His daughter, Pia Benegal, confirmed the news of his death to *PTI*. "He passed away at 6.38 p.m. at Wockhardt Hospital Mumbai Central. He had been suffering from chronic kidney disease for several years but it had gotten very bad," she said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

RELATED REPORTS ON » PAGE 12

Domestic needs have to be prioritised: Joshi

A. M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

On National Consumer Day, the Union Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry will launch Jago Grahak Jago App, Jagriti App, and Jagriti Dashboard to protect consumers from the dark patterns on the Internet.

Talking to *The Hindu* on Tuesday, Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said the government's efforts are to balance between the interests of consumers and producers.

Mr. Joshi, also responded to a recent statement by Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on enhancing minimum support price, and said interest of consumers is served when there is abundant availability of food commodities produced by the farmers.

Pralhad Joshi

On the ban on exports on certain agricultural commodities, the Minister said it will not be advisable for India to gamble on international trade when it comes to food security. Domestic requirements have to be prioritised over trade gains, he said.

INTERVIEW ON » PAGE 11

Hebbalkar to complain to President, PM against Ravi

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Minister for Women and Child Development Laxmi Hebbalkar has said she will complain to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi against the alleged obscene slur used by BJP MLC C.T. Ravi against her in the Legislative Council on December 19.

"I am deeply hurt by the abusive words of BJP MLC C.T. Ravi against me. He insulted me on the floor of the House by using unparliamentary language. I will complain against this to the President and the Prime Minister," she told reporters. She also said her legal battle against the former Minister would continue.

Laxmi Hebbalkar

"I have risen in public life by struggle. It was never a red-carpet walk for me. I will hold my ground. I had surrendered to silence for the last two days as I was hurt and shocked. But I am back now," she said.

The Minister said she had received valuable moral support from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar after the incident. "Some Ministers supported me by releasing the video of Mr. Ravi's statement on social media and by publicly condemning the incident," she added.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 4

Kashmiri artisans give wings to the dodo

Made by locals in the Valley's *karkhanas*, over 50,000 papier mache models of the bird that became extinct in 1681 have been shipped to markets of Europe and Mauritius this year

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

This Christmas, papier mache artisans in Srinagar have given wings to thousands of dodos, a bird that became extinct in 1681 within 80 years of its interaction with humans and exposure to depleting forests.

Reyaz Jan, in his 70s, who was giving final touches to a papier mache model of the bird at a *karkhana* in Zadibal area of Srinagar, says, "I was introduced to the shape and size of the bird from pictures. Of late, we download images. The shape and size of the bird is endearing. I fell in love with it at first sight. It's sad that the bird is no more seen anywhere."

The dodos, which originally had grey or brown plumage, come in many colours in the papier mache form with floral and forest prints adorning its body.

"The floral prints symbolise how it was the depleting forest cover that resulted in the extinction of the bird," Mr. Jan says.

Besides dangling balls, jingles, crescents, Santas, stars and boxes, this year, Kashmir has exported these dodos in large quantities.

Christmas orders

Over 50,000 papier mache dodos have set their feet in markets of Europe and Mauritius in East Africa this year, just ahead of Christmas.

"Dodos were last seen in Mauritius. The bird is important to the place and is the national emblem there. We mostly export papier mache dodos to the country. There is a huge demand for dodo products, which come in different sizes," Faizan Mir, who runs Mir Arts, an exclusive papier mache arts showroom at Srinagar's Hawsal, says.

It takes five to 10 days to create large-sized dodos in *karkhanas* located in the Valley. "Our *karkhana* produced over 3,000 dodos this season for exports," says Mr. Mir.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

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I made a comeback in 2017 because of the HIL

I am happy that the Dragons team has given me an opportunity. We are a good side. We will work on the plan the coaches have given us

GETTY IMAGES & SIVA SANKAR A

INTERVIEW

AMIT ROHIDAS

K. Keerthivasan

Amit Rohidas has been one of the core players of the Indian men's team for the last five to six years. As the best person for the rushers job during penalty corners in the Indian team, the 31-year-old defender has proved his value time and again. The year 2017 was an important landmark for Amit for he made a strong comeback to the Indian team and has never looked back since. All thanks to HIL where he represented Kalinga Lancers. Lancers went on to win the tournament in 2017.

The two-time bronze medallist in Olympics is now is getting ready for HIL as part of Tamil Nadu Dragons to be held in Ranchi and Rourkela from December 28. "I am a big fan of the HIL because it supported me to come back to the Indian team. After that, I continued. I will try to maintain my fitness and skills which will help me in the future," he told *The Hindu* in Chennai before starting his training session. *Excerpts:*

You have completed 200 internationals in the recent friendly against Germany in New Delhi. When you look back, how do you feel?

I was surprised because no one knew and I didn't know either. I knew that the last 200 match was going to be 199. But when I reached the ground, Vikram(pal) (Competition Manager of Hockey India) *bhai* told me that I was going to score 200. Everyone was shocked including the coaching staff and our teammates. When they told me that I was going to complete 200, I was very happy. Because it is a big thing to play 200 matches for the country. At this level, I am happy that I have completed 200 for the country.

How do you see your career? How have you evolved in the 11 years since you made your Senior International debut in 2013?

Yes. I made my senior debut in 2013. After that, in 2014, my last World League Grand Final was in January. After that, I had a three-year break. I made a comeback in 2017, thanks to the Hockey India League. Otherwise, I don't know where I would be today.

I am a big fan of the Hockey India League because it supported me to come back to the Indian team. After that, I continued. I will try to maintain my fitness and skills which will help me in the future.

You were out of the team for three years. Were you injured or out of form?

I didn't have an injury. It's ups and downs any sportsperson faces. You learn a lot from that. I don't know why I was out. But I continued my hard work. I made a comeback in 2017 because of the HIL

What improvements did you make in 2017?

I continued to focus on my basics. I maintained my fitness. You can make a comeback if you have the age. Otherwise, it's difficult. I played in HIL and the department tournaments. If you don't maintain your fitness, you can't do anything.

How was the three years being out of the Indian team?

The three years were a difficult time. It's difficult to make a comeback. My family supported me a lot. They didn't let me down. They told me to believe in myself and work hard.

Any changes you made in your game to make a strong comeback?

I was trying to give my 100% in my basics. I was getting results from that. We (Kalinga Lancers) won the HIL.

What do you think about the Tamil Nadu Dragons team in the HIL?

I feel proud. I am happy that the Dragons team has given me an opportunity. We are a good side. We will work on the plan the coaches have given us.

Jip Janssen was part of the gold medal-winning team in the Netherlands team in the 2024 Paris Olympics. He is a very good defender. There are other good foreign players. How do you feel about that?

Jip Janssen is my good friend. Definitely, ours will be a good combination. We will do well in the HIL. It will be fun to play with them.

Odisha won the Senior National men's championships in Chennai recently. In the team, many players hail from Sundergarh where you were born.

We (Odisha) have been working hard for many years. We won the bronze

medal in 2016 in the 5-a-side Senior Men's Nationals. We were hoping to win the gold medal and very glad that we got it this time. We put in a lot of effort. The boys played well.

You won a bronze medal under head coach Graham Reid in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics & again a bronze with Craig Fulton at Paris.

Every coach has a different style of playing. Fulton was both an attacking and defensive coach. If we focus on attacking, we are not paying attention to the defence. If we are not paying attention to the defence, we might concede a goal. Fulton saw both parts equally. Reid was different. But he also had both attacking and defensive structures. Both coaches were similar in many ways.

How do you see India's defensive structure and how did you deal with the suspension in the match against Great Britain in the quarterfinals?

When I got my red card after 17 minutes, there were 43 minutes left. We worked a lot on that. Especially, when someone gets a card, it is 2 minutes, 5 minutes or 10 minutes. What should be our plan after that? We kept doing that plan.

We were getting success. But we saw more. After I got my red card, we could not attack but kept our house safe. Our planning was 100% successful.

Do you think that this is the best Indian team in the last decade or so. Winning two back to back medals in Olympics is not easy.

After we won the bronze medal in Paris, we went back to our homes. Everyone had different functions to attend. It was a busy schedule. I could not stay at home for a day. I left in the morning and came back in the evening. After 20 days, there was the Asian Champions Trophy (ACT). We had to manage. But once India called us, we had to come. We could not leave. At ACT, we had six senior players and the remaining were juniors. We were guiding the new players to play with a free mind. There is no pressure on us.

Will HIL be a selection of sorts for the FIH Pro League?

I think the selectors will select the team from HIL.

Are there any areas of improvement in the Indian team?

There has been a lot of improvement. From the facilities to equipments, there has been improvement in everything. Gradually, the team's performance has improved. Hockey India, the Government of Odisha, and Sports Authority of India have worked hard. Now, you can see the improvement. There will be more improvement. We will play HIL and the players will get better. That's the main target of HIL.

In the Paris Olympics, the conversion rate of penalty corners has been quite low. Is it because the rushers and overall defence have got better?

For example, if I am the first usher, the opponent has to do all the analysis. They have to watch our videos. For that, we are working hard. The opponent also is working hard. Sometimes, their plan is successful and sometimes not successful. This happens in a game. Sometimes, our drag flicker scores a good goal and sometimes not. If he doesn't score a goal in penalty corner, then we have to convert it into a field goal. We have to keep this balance.

Your coordination with Harmanpreet Singh has been very good.

We are in the same core group. We have the same relationship with everyone. We don't lack anything. We talk freely. If you have any problem or if you need anything, we talk to each other. On the ground, the more you are involved with the players, the better your performance is. That's why you can see the medals.

You had your hockey lessons at Panposh Sports Hostel in Rourkela where the HIL will be held. How does it feel?

I joined the hostel in 2004. It will be great because I have played many matches there. All the fans are great.

How come the fans regularly throng to the Stadiums for all International hockey matches in Odisha?

The atmosphere is different there. Hockey is very famous in Sundargarh district. Hockey players come to Odisha to learn, to enjoy and to support.

Host India lost the series to Germany in a shootout. The lessons learnt...

Our target was to give more opportunities to younger players and showcase our potential. You must have seen which players were playing, who were resting. If we don't give them (the youngsters) an opportunity, when will they improve? We have to show them a good performance and lead them. We lost the first match, but in the second match, we won but lost in the shootout with a good margin. We have to improve from there. We have to learn from there. We've learnt a lot from there.

What are your personal goals?

I don't look far ahead. Need to take it one match at a time. At the moment, it is HIL.

Who is your inspiration among the defenders?

My inspiration is Dilip Tirkey. I consider him my idol. Among foreigners, it is Germany's Moritz Furste. I played with him in HIL as an opponent and as a teammate. His behaviour, his game sense. I have learnt a lot from him.

Your HIL experience?

For three years, I played with Ranchi Rays and Kalinga Lancers. Among youngsters, all of them who are selected are good. All the teams have youngsters. The system is made so that the youngsters get chances to show their performance. So that they can lead the Indian team in the future. The system and rules are good. It's time to get together as a team and perform well in the HIL. As a senior player, I will share as much as I can. I will treat everyone equally.

INBRIEF

Free medical camp

Priyanka Homoeo Palace will organise a free homoeopathic, allopathic medical camp on December 25 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., along with blood donation. The camp will feature consultations by senior consultant nephrologists and transplant physicians on kidney diseases. Free homoeopathic medicines will also be provided. The camp, which will be sponsored by the Indo-German Homoeopathic Clinical Research Laboratory, will be held at Priyanka Homoeo Palace, 335/42, 58th Cross, 3rd Block, Rajajingar.

Christmas musical organised

Hope From the Manger, a musical conveying the true essence of Christmas, was held at the Bishop Cotton Girls' School on December 20. The celebrant of the event, Rt. Rev. Martin C. Borgai addressed the gathering and delivered the Christmas message. He focused on three principles: reflection, reconciliation, and restoration. He highlighted that the birth of Christ is the only universal hope for humanity. Rt. Rev. Dr. P. K. Samuel, Bishop Emeritus, offered greetings of hope in this joyous season. The Christmas melodies were delivered.

Training programme held

Fifty-six teacher mentors from across the State and from Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu attended a two-day Residential Teacher Mentors Training Programme in the city on December 19 and 20. The programme was organised by the Bangalore branch of the Bureau of Indian Standards, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

3 more city railway stations to have thermal printers for unreserved tickets

Each ticket issued through thermal printers will feature a unique QR code

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal is one of the railway stations that will have thermal printers. FILE PHOTO

In a significant step to curb ticket fraud and improve efficiency, the Bengaluru Railway Division is set to deploy thermal printers at various stations in the city. These advanced printers will replace the older dot matrix models, enhancing ticketing speed and security.

Each ticket issued through thermal printers will feature a unique QR code, enabling Travelling Ticket Examiners (TTEs) to verify its authenticity using a specially developed mobile application. According to railway officials, this measure aims to eliminate counterfeit unreserved tickets, which have been a growing concern in various parts of the country.

A South Western Railway (SWR) official said that several cases of duplicate unreserved tickets using printing machines have been reported across the country. "The adoption of thermal printers ensures tickets cannot be duplicated, offering a foolproof solution," he said.

According to officials, two thermal printers have already been installed at the main entrance counters of KSR Bengaluru City station to kickstart the initiative. Plans are underway to set up one printer each at K.R. Puram, Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal, and Yesvantpur stations.

The switch to thermal printers is expected to reduce the time taken to issue tickets significantly. While the current dot matrix printers require around 20 seconds to print a ticket, thermal printers can complete the process in just three seconds. "This improvement is anticipated to expedite ticket issuance, benefiting commuters and reducing queues at ticket counters," officials said. Another official revealed that the initiative aligns with Railway Board directives mandating the exclusive procurement of thermal printers for Unreserved Ticketing Systems (UTS). No new dot matrix printers will be acquired; thermal printers will replace them across all UTS counters.

"In addition to speed and security, the new printers offer quieter operation compared to the noisy dot matrix models. Thermal printing technology, which operates through heat generation, is already in use for tickets issued via Automated Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs)," official added.

Tight security for New Year Eve celebrations

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

People shop for decorative lights ahead of Christmas in Bengaluru on Monday. AFP

Home Minister G. Parameshwara chaired a review meeting on Monday to discuss preparations for New Year's Eve celebrations at M.G. Road, Bengaluru. The meeting followed recent allegations by Opposition parties regarding law and order issues in Belagavi during the recently concluded legislature session.

Mr. Parameshwara said elaborate security arrangements had been made for the upcoming Christmas and New Year celebrations in Bengaluru, with special emphasis on women's safety.

Speaking to the media after attending a meeting with the senior police officials at the office of the Bengaluru Police Commissioner, he said a crowd of over seven lakh people are expected to gather on M.G. Road. "Police officials have been directed to take all precautionary measures, and the concerned officials will be held responsible for any eventualities," he said.

"The state government has "waged war against drugs" in the run-up to the celebrations. We will also take up special drives to check drunk driving, wheeling and other anti-social activities. All habitual offenders should be kept under watch and ensure that the celebrations are peaceful," he said. Referring to the law and order issues at the celebrations on M.G. Road a few years ago, Mr. Parameshwara said the police should ensure peaceful celebrations of the event with no untoward incident.

Director General and Inspector General of Police Alok Mohan, City police commissioner B. Dayananda, and other senior officials attended the meeting.

Home bakers in demand for Christmas; social media comes in handy

A.K. Jaswanth
BENGALURU

Some home bakers in the city often cater to specific dietary needs of their customers. FILE PHOTO

Christmas is a season of celebration, and what better way to mark the time than with homemade plum cakes, rose cookies, and gingerbread? Many Bengalureans now choose home bakers instead of traditional bakeries for their festive celebrations.

"The food from home bakers is always hygienic and tasty, and the gingerbread cookies I have ordered from a home baker are the best I have ever had. They are so soft and tasty, and the icing has the right amount of sweetness," said Rashmi, a Namma Metro employee.

Some home bakers often cater to specific dietary needs with gluten-free, vegan, and sugar-free options. They also offer customised cakes and cookies with personalised decorations. "I am very conscious about my sugar consumption for health reasons, and it is difficult to find sugar-free baked goods in commercial bakeries at affordable prices. But there are many home bakers online who sell sugar-free items at a relatively cheaper price, and there is also an option to choose different flavours and spices," said Jennifer. G. P., a resident of Kodigehalli.

"Home bakers reported that offers have been pouring in for more than a month and called the Christmas season their best season. "Christmas is our profit season and the orders are more compared to the other times. The quality of our cakes is unique, and plum cakes are more in demand during this time. The key to attracting customers is by providing high-quality cake at cheaper prices," said Ashwini Y. J., a home baker. Home bakers use social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook to showcase their creations and connect with potential customers. They mentioned an app to connect home bakers with customers.

"Building a loyal customer base is a main way to grow our businesses, and the word of mouth referrals are more effective," said Naga Guna, a home baker who makes Yule log cakes.

Man, held under digital arrest, loses ₹11.8 crore to cyber-fraudsters

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The North East division cybercrime police have registered a case against unidentified persons who posing as officials Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) officials, threatened to book a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 and swindled ₹11.8 crore on the pretext of verifying his bank accounts.

The victim, Vijay Kumar, 39, a resident of GKVK Layout, was threatened with fake cases, held under "digital arrest" for almost a month, claiming that he was under investigation and accessed his bank accounts and transferred the money. Realising that he had been cheated, the victim approached the police and filed a complaint.

According to the complaint, Mr Kumar received a call from unknown people claiming to be from TRAI and informed him that his SIM number was being used for illegal activities and Mumbai Police had probed a case.

The caller informed him further that using his Aadhaar card, a person identified as Naresh Goel had opened a bank account in a nationalized bank and used the account for money laundering to the tune of ₹6 crore.

The accused made him download a video calling app and said that he was under "digital arrest" and forced him to give access to all his bank accounts for verification. Vijay Kumar followed their instructions for one month and did not reveal this to anyone, as they had threatened him with dire consequences.

The accused accessed all his nine bank accounts and made transactions totalling worth ₹11,83,55,648.52 between November 11 and December 12.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public that Duplicate Sale Deed dated 18.02.2012 registered as document No.5217/2011-12 of Book-I in the office of the Sub-Registrar Attibele Bangalore Situated at **Marsur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District**, has been lost. All the persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the Sale Deed If anyone has already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within **7 days** from this present along with that Police complaint is also given. vide Lost Report No.1396868/2024.

Y. Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
Samvruddhi Legal, # 83, Ground Floor, 5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P. Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-78. **M : 9916343921**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: 34 UBL 2024-25 Dated: 12.12.2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Sectional OFC Maintenance Contract over Hubballi Division for ONE year.	Rs. 27,65,663.60

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 13.01.2025**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Asst. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/East/Hubballi
PUB/645/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. 50/2024 Dated: 18.12.2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items:

Tender No.	Description in Brief
L8246919	Supply of 5 watt VHF Digital Walkie Talkie Set without Keypad and without Display to Specification No. RDSO/SPN/TC/107/2018 (Ver. 2.1) or latest. **(Qty: 1107 Nos.)**

Last date for Submission/Tender Due on: **Upto 10:30 Hrs. on 13.01.2025**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/642/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Senior Divisional Materials Manager, Bengaluru**
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Application Notification No. 565/ATVM Facilitator/12/2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites sealed applications from Retired Railway Employees / General Public for Engagement as ATVM Facilitator at the following Railway Stations over Bengaluru Division of South Western Railway for issuing of Unreserved / General Tickets through ATVM machines on recharge bonus basis for the period upto 31.03.2025:

Sl. No.	Station	Station Category	No. of Vacancy	Sl. No.	Station	Station Category	No. of Vacancy
1	KSR Bengaluru City	NSG-1	5	11	Ramanagaram	NSG-4	2
2	Bengaluru Cantonment	NSG-3	4	12	Kuppam	NSG-4	2
3	Yesvanthpur	NSG-2	3	13	Sir M Visveswaraya B'luru	NSG-2	2
4	Tumkur	NSG-4	3	14	Bangarpet	NSG-3	2
5	Krishnarajapuram	NSG-3	5	15	Maddur	NSG-5	2
6	Mandya	NSG-3	1	16	Chikkabanavar	NSG-5	1
7	Channapatna	NSG-4	2	17	Bengaluru East	NSG-5	3
8	Hosur	NSG-4	6	18	Dharmapuri	NSG-5	1
9	Hindupur	NSG-4	4	19	Whitefield	NSG-4	3
10	Malur	NSG-4	2	20	Yelahanka	NSG-4	3
						TOTAL	56

Date and time of Submission of Application: From 10:00 Hrs to 15:00 Hrs, 09.01.2025
Date and time of Opening of Application: 15:05 Hrs, 09.01.2025
For details log on: www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in
PUB/644/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/Bengaluru**
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

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EXHIBITION / EVENTS FAIR

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தமிழ்ப் புத்தகத் திருவிழா 2024 பெங்களூரு
TAMIL BOOK FESTIVAL
Time: 10 am to 9 pm
KANNADA, ENGLISH BOOKS ALSO AVAILABLE
20th - 29th December-2024
The Institution of Engineers #3, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Opp. Indian Express, Bengaluru
FREE PARKING
9916542367
6363118988

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, REKHA Prasad Kumar, W/o. Mohan Reddy Pudi, residing at #33, 3rd Cross, 1st Main, Near Hanuma Temple, VSR Layout, A.Narayanapura, Bengaluru 560016, have changed my name to Rekha Prasad vide Affidavit Dated: 23/12/2024 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan, Bengaluru.

I, PARAS J Thakkar, S/o Jithendra H Thakkar, R/a BB and N Manzil, #2, 4th Cross, 3rd Main Road, Basaveshwara Layout, Nagashettyhalli, RMV II Stage, Bengaluru-560094 have changed my name to Mohammed Faraaz vide affidavit dt: 21.12.2024 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan, B'lore

I, KALANDI Devi, spouse of JC752811M Rank : Ex Sub Maj (Honorary/Captain) Name: Ram Dinesh Thakur, Resident of Vill-Village : Chakmohabbat, Post- Umanagar, District- Muzaffarpur, Bihar -842004, Have changed my name from Kalandi Devi to Kalindi Devi Vide affidavit Dated 21 Dec 2024 Before Notary A.R.Muneer Ahmed.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pushpa Ponnappa, wife of Late. Ex SGT Ponnappa Choundira Khushalappa, resident of 207, "Karthikeya", 4 TH B Main Road, OMBR Layout, Banaswadi, Bangalore-560043 have changed my name from **Pushpa Ponnappa** to **Choundira Ponnappa Pushpavathy** vide Affidavit dated.19.12.2024 (Certificate No. INKA0033948923600W) at Bangalore.

RENTAL

FOR RENT

National Housing Bank, a statutory body under Govt. of India requires a 2/3 BHK Flat (preferably furnished) in Bengaluru for rent purpose to be used as Visiting Officers' Flat (VoF).

Call: 011-39187115

LEGAL NOTICE

Before the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal Palakkad
IA No. 2469/2021
OP (MV) 516/2015
National Insurance Co. Ltd.- Petitioner/R3
Vs
Harishankar, S/o. Nikant Jha, 3162, Sangastrasan Road, Central Delhi - 110055 - Respondent/R1
NOTICE
Take notice that the above petition stands posted to 13/01/2025 at 11 AM for your appearance in person or through a pleader in the above petition for Revenue Recovery Proceeding failing which you will be called absent and set exparte.
Dated this the 19th of December 2024
Sd/- Adv. P.K. Devadas

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE I ADDL. DISTRICT JUDGE MOTOR ACCIDENT CLAIMS TRIBUNAL, CHITTOOR, AP
M.V.O.P. No. 117 of 2020
Between:
J.K.Venkatadri ...Petitioner
And:
V.Govardan & 2 others ...Respondents
To;
R2. K.Sree Devi,
W/o. K.Sunil Kumar
R/at D.No.3, No.12-14
Puniya Bhoomi Layout,
Kalkere, Bangalore,
Karnataka - 560043.
OBJECTION NOTICE TO 2nd RESPONDENT
1.The Claimant has filed a Claim Application again, you claiming compensation under sec. 166 of M.V.Act 59 of 1988 as Amended in Act 54 of 1994.
2.The above numbered O.P. is posted for hearing at **10.30 a.m. on 17-01-2025** before the said Tribunal.
3.If you have any objection, you may appear either in person or through an Advocate, to answer the petition. If you fail to appear to 10.30 a.m. on the above said date before the said Tribunal, hearing will be conducted and you will be set exparte.
Sd/-
V.RAMANARAYANA REDDY
Advocate for Claimant
Place:Chittoor Dated:22-12-2024

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE PRL.CIVIL JUDGE (SENIOR DIVISION):: TENALI
I.A. 207/2024 IN O.S. 209/2018
Between:-
Modukuri Rajyalakshmi ...Petitioner/Plaintiff
and
1. Modukuri Kkundavali @ Papayamma (died)
2. Modukuri Prameela Rani and 4 others ....Respondents/Defendants
To
R5. Muppala Krishna Divya, W/o. M. Ravi,
R6. Dodla Krishna Keerthi, W/o. Purandhara Reddy,
Both are R/o. Flat No.45, 2nd Floor, 5th Main, Near Bharath Petroleum Pump, Central Revenue Lay out, Sivaram Kuranth Nagar, Bedgenagar, Bangalore - 560 077.
Whereas the plaintiff has filed partition suit against the defendants and the above petition filed if you have got any objection, you may appear pear before this Hon'ble Court on 06-01-2025 at 10-30 A.M. either in person or through an Advo- cate and file your objection. If you fail to do so, the matter will be decided exparte.
Adjournment Date 6-01-2025
(By order of the Hon'ble Court)
GADDIPATI RAMBABU
Advocate for Petitioner/Plaintiff
Tenali, Guntur District, A.P.
Cell No. 9490224350.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE PRL.CIVIL JUDGE (SENIOR DIVISION):: TENALI
I.A. 206/2024 IN O.S. 209/2018
Between:-
Modukuri Rajyalakshmi ...Petitioner/Plaintiff
and
1. Modukuri Kkundavali @ Papayamma (died)
2. Modukuri Prameela Rani and 4 others ....Respondents/Defendants
To
R5. Muppala Krishna Divya, W/o. M. Ravi,
R6. Dodla Krishna Keerthi, W/o. Purandhara Reddy,
Both are R/o. Flat No.45, 2nd Floor, 5th Main, Near Bharath Petroleum Pump, Central Revenue Lay out, Sivaram Kuranth Nagar, Bedgenagar, Bangalore - 560 077.
Whereas the plaintiff has filed partition suit against the defendants and the above petition filed if you have got any objection, you may appear pear before this Hon'ble Court on 06-01-2025 at 10-30 A.M. either in person or through an Advo- cate and file your objection. If you fail to do so, the matter will be decided exparte.
Adjournment Date 6-01-2025
(By order of the Hon'ble Court)
GADDIPATI RAMBABU
Advocate for Petitioner/Plaintiff
Tenali, Guntur District, A.P.
Cell No. 9490224350.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE PRL.CIVIL JUDGE (SENIOR DIVISION):: TENALI
I.A. 205/2024 IN O.S. 209/2018
Between:-
Modukuri Rajyalakshmi ...Petitioner/Plaintiff
and
1. Modukuri Kkundavali @ Papayamma (died)
2. Modukuri Prameela Rani and 4 others ....Respondents/Defendants
To
R5. Muppala Krishna Divya, W/o. M. Ravi,
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Whereas the plaintiff has filed partition suit against the defendants and the above petition filed if you have got any objection, you may appear pear before this Hon'ble Court on 06-01-2025 at 10-30 A.M. either in person or through an Advo- cate and file your objection. If you fail to do so, the matter will be decided exparte.
Adjournment Date 6-01-2025
(By order of the Hon'ble Court)
GADDIPATI RAMBABU
Advocate for Petitioner/Plaintiff
Tenali, Guntur District, A.P.
Cell No. 9490224350.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: E-GSU-ELE-2024-25-OT-12 Dated: 14.12.2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 25 kV, 50 Hz, Single Phase, AC Electrification with Necessary Modification in the Existing OHE Arrangement at Krishnarajapuram Yard for Quadrupling of Bengaluru Cantonment - Whitefield Section.	Rs. 9,09,02,664.25

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 06.01.2025**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/646/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Gati Shakti Unit/ Bengaluru**
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: SnT_GSUMYS_Slidingboom Dated: 07.01.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Provision of sliding booms at 1 No. Traffic Interlocked LC gate & 20 Nos. Engineering interlocked LC gates (Total 21 LC gates) & Provision of Key locked checking relay (KLCR) for enhancing the reliability at 32 interlocked LC gates over Mysuru (MYS) Division (Excluding HMRDC & proposed / Sanctioned Automatic block signalling sections).	Rs. 2,43,36,408.36

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 07.01.2025**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/ S&T/Gati Shakti/Mysuru
PUB/641/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our clients **Mr.K.Kaulutlaiah and Mr.K.Nagaraju** both are sons of Mr.K.Lakshmanna, are intending to purchase the schedule property mentioned hereunder from **Mrs.J.Mayamma** W/o Mr.Thamanna ; any person/s objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our clients shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of Gramatana property **bearing No.28,** bearing RDPRPID No. 1502004001002000036, Katha No.34/29/28/2, (old Katha No.24) Situated at **Kammasandra Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore,** measuring East to West 50 Feet and North to South 115 Feet in all measuring **5750 Square Feet,** and bounded on the:
East by : Property belonging to Karinarayanappa, West by : Property belonging to Karinarayanappa, North by : Property belonging to Chinthappa, South by : Road.
C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M: 9845846428, 9108784843, 080-48658774
E- Mail: rvlaw.76@gmail.com

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. 34 UBL 2024-25 Dated: 16.12.2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders (IREPS) for the following works:

Sl.No.	Name of work	Approx. Value
1	**Hubballi Division:** Badami - Hotagi (BDM-HG): Improvement to Limited Height Subway No. 88 at (Br No. 79-B) at Km. 203/300-400 between Aliyabad - Minchnal (AYB-MNL) Stations and retaining wall, approach road and Height gauge in Asst. Divisional Engineer / Vijayapura Sub Division.	Rs. 2,17,06,924.00
2	**Hubballi Division:** Badami - Hotagi (BDM-HG): Improvement to Limited Height Subway No. 96 at Km. 218/500-600 between Minchnal - Nimbal (MNL-NBL) Station by construction of retaining wall and height gauge for LC No. 92, 96 and 98 in Asst. Divisional Engineer / Vijayapura Sub Division.	Rs. 2,01,37,395.00
3	**Hubballi Division:** Providing assisting gang for USFD testing on track as well as assisting transporting of machinery over Hubballi division for a period of 24 Months.	Rs. 93,99,025.00
4	**Hubballi Division:** Improvements to Road Cross Drainage, sheeting arrangements of RUB's in Asst. Divisional Engineer / West / Hubballi Sub Division.	Rs. 2,32,57,946.00
5	**Hubballi Division:** Alnawar - Londa (LWR-LD) Section - Rebuilding of Br No. 133DN, 140DN & 144DN on account of ORN 3 with precast RCC segmental Boxes by RH girder/cut and cover method in Alnawar - Tavargatti (LWR-TVG) Section.	Rs. 2,73,60,055.00

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 16.01.2025**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Engineer/Co-Ordination Hubballi
PUB/640/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

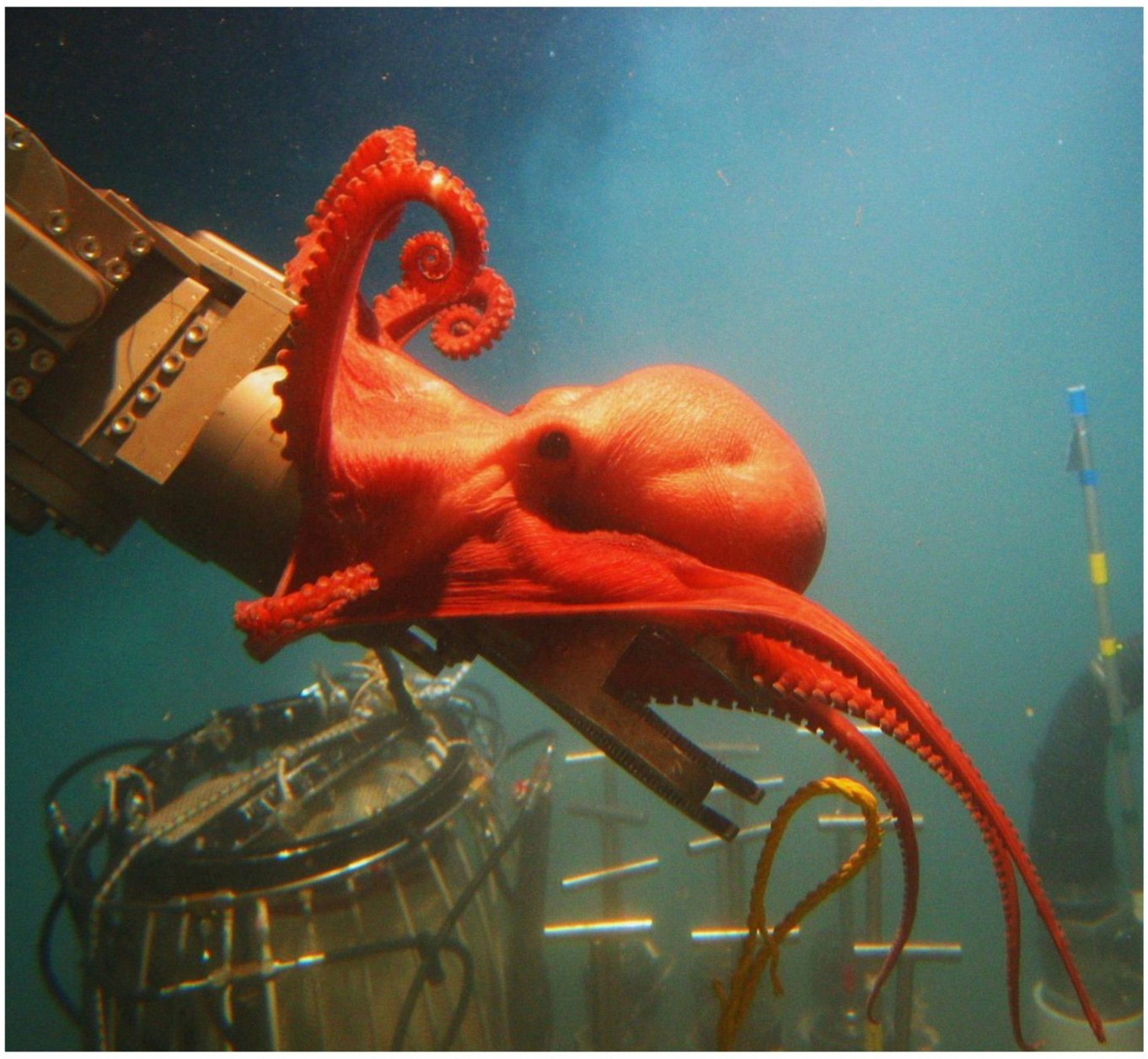
This is inform to the General Public, that my client **Sri. Avinash V.** S/o Sri. Vijayasekar. M, aged about 31 years, Residing at No. 295, 11th Cross, 25th Main Road, Near Oxford School, J.P Nagar,1st Phase, Bangalore-560 078 is going to purchase the property mentioned herein from its owner **Sri. S.E. Ramesh Babu** S/o Late S. Eshwar Rao Residing at No. 1254, Lakshmi Narayana Nivasa, Kavi Ranna Road, Opposite Kamala Nursing Home, Srinagar, Bangalore South, Bangalore–560 050. Original owner **Sri. S.E. Ramesh Babu** has **lost all original documents of the schedule property.** If any Person/Persons having any objection/s over the said sale transaction, please file their written objection to my below mentioned address ***within 7 days*** of this notice with documentary proof, failing which my clients shall proceed to purchase the same, any objection received after 7 days shall not be considered.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the Immovable Commercial Shop Property bearing **BDA Site No. 550** formed in Sy.No. 3 and 69, situated at **Gavipura, Sunkenahalli, Bangalore,** now comes under the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, Bangalore and the BBMP has assigned the Schedule Property as Ward No. Old 52, New Ward No. 155 of Hanumantha nagar, Municipal No. 16, situated at **Jhansi Rani Lakshmi Bai Road, 4th Main, Bhavani Nagar, Gavipuram, Bangalore,** PID No. 52-55-16, new BBMP E PID No. 2548446050 measuring **East to West: 34 ½ Feet** and **North to South: 20-0 Feet,** in all **measuring 77.00 Sq. Yards,** after land acquired for road widening the correct measurement of the property is **East to West: (33.6+34)/2 Feet** and **North to South: (20+5)/2 Feet,** in all **measuring 422.5 Sq. Feet** and bounded on the: **East By:** Vacant Property, **West By:** Road, **North By:** Site No. 551, **South By:** Road.
Sd/-
H. R. Sunil Kumar,
Advocate and Legal Consultant,
No. 47/1-23, 2nd Floor, 2nd Main Road, Tata Silk Farm, K.R Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560 004 Ph No. 94496 74680

Octopuses and their kin are a new animal welfare frontier

It appears that cephalopods as a group may be similar in intelligence to vertebrates as a group. Since many societies have animal welfare standards for mice, rats, chickens, and other vertebrates, logic would suggest that there's a case for regulations enforcing humane treatment of cephalopods

Rachel Blaser



A deep-water octopus investigates the port manipulator arm of the ALVIN submersible research vessel. US NOAA

We named him Squirt – not because he was the smallest of the 16 cuttlefish in the pool, but because anyone with the audacity to scoop him into a separate tank to study him was likely to get soaked. Squirt had notoriously accurate aim.

As a comparative psychologist, I'm used to assaults from my experimental subjects. I've been stung by bees, pinched by crayfish, and battered by indignant pigeons. But, somehow, with Squirt it felt different. As he eyed us with his W-shaped pupils, he seemed clearly to be plotting against us.

Of course, I'm being anthropomorphic. Science does not yet have the tools to confirm whether cuttlefish have emotional states or whether they are capable of conscious experience, much less sinister plots. But there's undeniably something special about cephalopods – the class of ocean-dwelling invertebrates that includes cuttlefish, squid, and octopus.

As researchers learn more about cephalopods' cognitive skills, there are calls to treat them in ways better aligned with their level of intelligence. California and Washington state both approved bans on octopus farming in 2024. Hawaii is considering similar action, and a ban on farming octopus or importing farmed octopus meat has been introduced in Congress. A planned octopus farm in Spain's Canary Islands is attracting opposition from scientists and animal welfare advocates.

Critics offer many arguments against raising octopuses for food, including possible releases of waste, antibiotics, or pathogens from aquaculture facilities. But as a psychologist, I see intelligence as the most intriguing part of the equation. Just how smart are cephalopods, really? After all, it's legal to farm chickens and cows. Is an octopus smarter than, say, a turkey?

A big, diverse group

Cephalopods are a broad class of molluscs that includes the coleoids – cuttlefish, octopus, and squid – as well as the chambered nautilus. Coleoids range in size from adult squid only a few millimetres long (*Idiosepius*) to the largest living invertebrates, the giant squid (*Architeuthis*) and colossal squid (*Mesonychoteuthis*), which can grow to over 40 feet in length and weigh over 450 kg.

Some of these species live alone in the nearly featureless darkness of the deep ocean; others live socially on active, sunny coral reefs. Many are skilled hunters, but some feed passively on floating debris. Because of this enormous diversity, the size and complexity of cephalopod brains and behaviours also vary tremendously.

Almost everything that's known about cephalopod cognition comes from intensive study of just a few species. When considering the welfare of a designated species of captive octopus, it's important to be careful about using data collected from a distant evolutionary relative.

Can we measure alien intelligence?

Intelligence is fiendishly hard to define and measure, even in humans. The challenge grows exponentially in studying animals with sensory, motivational, and problem-solving skills that differ profoundly from ours.

Historically, researchers have tended to focus on whether animals think like humans, ignoring the abilities that animals may have that humans lack. To avoid this problem, scientists have tried to find more objective measures of cognitive abilities.

One option is a relative measure of brain to body size. The best-studied species of octopus, *Octopus vulgaris*, has about 500 million neurons; that's relatively large for its small body size and similar to a starling, rabbit, or turkey.

More accurate measures may include the size, neurone count, or surface area of specific brain structures thought to be important for learning. While this is useful in mammals, the nervous system of an octopus is built completely differently.

Over half of the neurones in *Octopus vulgaris*, about 300 million, are not in the brain at all but distributed in "mini-brains," or ganglia, in the arms. Within the central brain, most of the remaining neurones are dedicated to visual processing, leaving less than a quarter of its neurones for other processes such as learning and memory.

In other species of octopus, the general structure is similar, but complexity varies. Wrinkles and folds in the brain increase its surface area and may enhance neural connections and communication. Some species of octopus, notably those living in reef habitats, have more wrinkled brains than those living in the deep sea, suggesting that these species may possess a higher degree of intelligence.

Holding out for a better snack

Because brain structure is not a foolproof measure of intelligence, behavioural tests may provide better evidence. One of the highly complex behaviours that many cephalopods show is visual camouflage. They can open and close tiny sacs just below their skin that contain coloured pigments and reflectors, revealing specific colours. *Octopus vulgaris* has up to 1,50000 chromatophores, or pigment sacs, in a single square inch of skin.

Like many cephalopods, the common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) is thought to be colour-blind. But it can use its excellent vision to produce a dizzying array of patterns across its body as camouflage. The Australian giant cuttlefish, *Sepia apama*, uses its chromatophores to communicate, creating patterns that attract mates and warn off aggressors. This ability can also come in handy for hunting; many cephalopods are ambush predators that blend into the background or even lure their prey.

The hallmark of intelligent behaviour, however, is learning and memory, and there is plenty of evidence that some octopuses and cuttlefish learn in a way that is comparable to learning in vertebrates. The common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*), as well as the common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*) and the day octopus (*Octopus cyanea*), can all form simple associations, such as learning which image on a screen predicts that food will appear.

Some cephalopods may be capable of more complicated forms of learning, such as reversal learning - learning to flexibly adjust behaviour when different stimuli signal reward. They may also be able to inhibit impulsive responses. In a 2021 study that gave common cuttlefish a choice between a less desirable but immediate snack of crab and a preferred treat of live shrimp after a delay, many of the cuttlefish chose to wait for the shrimp.

A new frontier for animal welfare

Considering what's known about their brain structures, sensory systems, and learning capacity, it appears that cephalopods as a group may be similar in intelligence to vertebrates as a group. Since many societies have animal welfare standards for mice, rats, chickens, and other vertebrates, logic would suggest that there's an equal case for regulations enforcing humane treatment of cephalopods.

Such rules generally specify that when a species is held in captivity, its housing conditions should support the animal's welfare and natural behaviour. This view has led some U.S. states to outlaw confined cages for egg-laying hens and crates too narrow for pregnant sows to turn around.

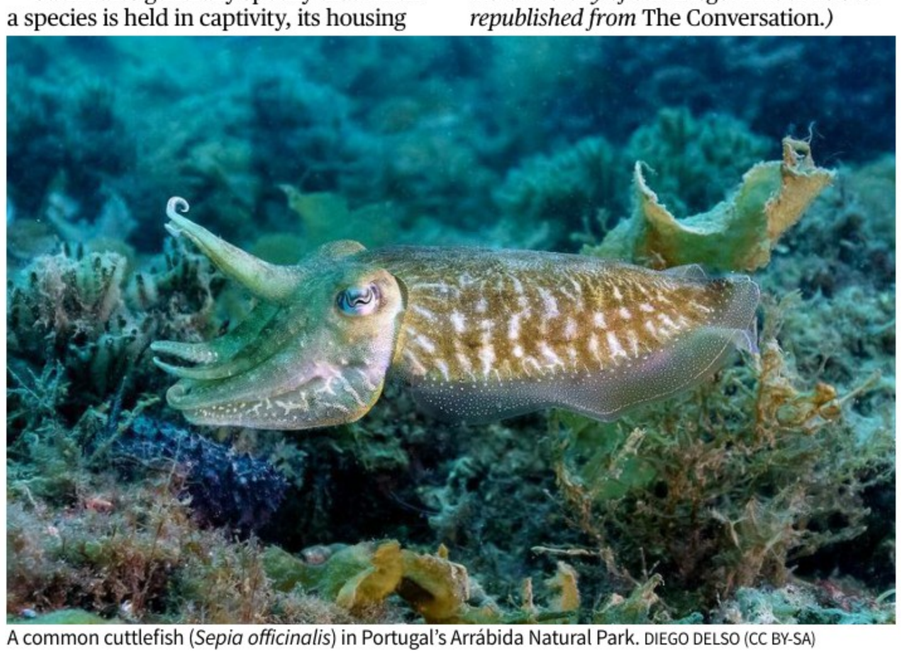
Cephalopods are capable of visual camouflage. They use tiny sacs just below their skin that contain coloured pigments and reflectors, revealing specific colours. *Octopus vulgaris* has up to 1,50000 chromatophore in a single square inch of skin

Animal welfare regulations say little about invertebrates, but guidelines for the care and use of captive cephalopods have started to appear over the past decade. In 2010, the European Union required considering ethical issues when using cephalopods for research. And in 2015, AAALAC International, an international accreditation organisation for ethical animal research, and the Federation of European Laboratory Animal Science Associations promoted guidelines for the care and use of cephalopods in research. The U.S. National Institutes of Health is currently considering similar guidelines.

The "alien" minds of octopuses and their relatives are fascinating, not the least because they provide a mirror through which we can reflect on more familiar forms of intelligence. Deciding which species deserve moral consideration requires selecting criteria, such as neurone count or learning capacity, to inform those choices. Once these criteria are set, it may be well to also consider how they apply to the rodents, birds, and fish that occupy more familiar roles in our lives.

(Rachel Blaser is professor of neuroscience, cognition, and behaviour at the University of San Diego. This article is republished from The Conversation.*)*

A common octopus. ALBERT KOK (CC BY-SA)



A common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) in Portugal's Arrábida Natural Park. DIEGO DELSO (CC BY-SA)

A Kashmiri boatman breaks the frozen surface to make his way through Dal Lake, Srinagar. AP

Kashmiris forced to burn wood for heat as weather turns frigid

Press Trust of India

Residents of Kashmir are going back to traditional ways of coping with intense cold wave conditions as frequent and unscheduled power cuts have rendered modern heating gadgets useless.

Kashmir is dealing with Chillai Kalan, a 40-day winter period notorious for being the harshest part of the season. On Saturday, Srinagar city witnessed the coldest night in 33 years after the minimum temperature dipped to a bone-chilling -8.5 degrees C. Other places in the valley also experienced extreme sub-zero temperatures, which caused water pipes in many areas to freeze.

Over the past couple of decades, residents of urban Kashmir had done away with traditional heating arrangements, including wood-based hamams, bukharis, and wicker-claypot kangris, as the supply of electricity improved year after year

But with the region experiencing one of its toughest winters in recent memory, power supply in most parts of Kashmir has been erratic at best, rendering electric heating redundant.

"Over the past few years, we had become accustomed to using electric gadgets to keep ourselves warm. With 12-hour cuts every day, we have now gone back to kangris," Yasir Ahmad, a resident

Over the past decades, urban Kashmiris had done away with wood-based hamams, bukharis, and wicker-claypot kangris, as the supply of electricity improved year after year

of the posh Gulbahar colony in Srinagar, said.

Ahmad said his investment in an air conditioner had "gone to waste."

Abdul Ahad Wani, who lives in the old city's Rainawari area, said he recently converted his wood-fuelled hamam to an electricity-powered one. "I felt the wood hamam was cumbersome, and an electric hamam would be available at the push of a switch," Mr. Wani said.

"But people in power have a habit of proving us wrong."

With limited LPG and kerosene in the open market, power cuts have fuelled business for wood and charcoal vendors.

"All I can say is the demand for wood has been good this winter. People have to keep themselves warm, and there is nothing better than wood in these times," Mohammad Abbas Zargar, a firewood dealer, said.

An official of the Kashmir Power Development Corporation (KPDCL) said that while there had been load-shedding due to the sharp rise in demand, claims of 16-hour cuts may be exaggerated.

"We are trying our best to follow the load-shedding schedule that has been announced already. However, due to overloading of the circuit, distribution transformers and other allied infrastructure sometimes get damaged, leading to longer power cuts," he said.

The official added that although the KDPCL has maintained a transformer bank to keep disruptions to a minimum, the bank also suffers more damage during winter. "Our staff is doing its job. We request people to use electricity judiciously and as per their load agreement," he added.

Meanwhile, traffic authorities have asked motorists to drive carefully as roads in many places are covered by a layer of ice at dawn, rendering them slippery.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Central Bank branch opened

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 37th branch of the Central Bank of India was opened on Sunday at Marathahalli. M.V. Rao, the bank's managing director and chief executive officer, highlighted its legacy of innovation since 1911 as a truly Swadeshi bank. He shared insights into its pioneering initiatives, including digital lending and collection management.

Timings
BENGALURU

TUESDAY, DEC. 24
RISE 06:38 SET 18:00
RISE 00:57 SET 13:02

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25
RISE 06:39 SET 18:01
RISE 01:42 SET 13:37

THURSDAY, DEC. 26
RISE 06:39 SET 18:01
RISE 02:28 SET 14:15

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	22
Mysuru	29	19
Bengaluru	28	20

Bengaluru Today
29°C Morning will be slight cool. Day will be slight warm. Night will be pleasant. Chances of light rain and thundershower at few places.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
28°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. The day will be comfortable. Night will be slight cool. Mostly dry weather to prevail.

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THE HINDU
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Work orders for asphalting, tenders for white-topping issued on same day

It means the civic body would be spending ₹98 crore more on the roads which were asphalted at a cost of ₹23 crore

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

In what is perceived as unnecessary spending, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has started digging newly asphalted roads to white-top them, sparking outrage.

It has now come to light that the civic body issued work orders for asphalting seven roads in Chamarajpet on February 2, 2024, and floated a tender for white-topping the same set of roads the same day.

According to documents accessed by *The Hindu*, the BBMP, on February 2, 2024, issued work orders for the comprehensive development of roads, drains, and footpaths on 2nd Main Road, 3rd Main Road, 5th Main Road, 7th Cross, 9th Cross, Pampa Mahakavi Road, 1st Cross, Albert Victor Road, 1st Main in Chamarajpet.

3rd Main Road in Chamarajpet is one of the roads that will undergo development, for which work orders were issued. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

The tender for the work was invited on September 17, 2022. Star Infratech bagged the tender, and the work was also completed. The total cost of the project was ₹23 crore.

For white-topping, the BBMP issued a work order to JMC Constructions Private Limited on June 20, 2024, and the total cost of the project was estimated at ₹98 crore. The work order also included the comprehensive development of footpaths apart from white-topping. It means, within months, the BBMP would be spending ₹98 crore more on the roads which were asphalted at a cost of ₹23 crore.

The BBMP issued the tender for white-topping after Chamarajpet MLA, B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan wrote to BBMP Chief Engineer appealing to him to implement the project on priority.

The letter was written on October 26, 2023. Mr. Ahmed was unavailable for comment.

Sriramegowda, President of Chamrajpet Nagarikara Okkuta, said the civic body had violated its own rules. "According to rules laid down by the civic body, there is a blanket ban on digging of roads for three years from the date of completion of work. It is not uncommon for other agencies to dig the roads. But in this case the BBMP has itself violated the rule," he said. He demanded that the civic body should immediately withdraw the work order for white-topping these roads as they have been recently asphalted.

Probe ordered
Chief Civic Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath told *The Hindu* that he had directed the civic body's engineer-in-chief to investigate the issue.

A year of big spending for households in Bengaluru

Rewind 2024

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

The first few months of drought followed by unseasonal rains disrupted the horticulture crop cycles in Karnataka this year, driving up the prices of most vegetables and fruits. The monthly average vegetable-fruit budget of households in Bengaluru went up by at least ₹40-₹50 due to this.

During the summer season, beans touched one of its all-time highs with a kg. costing over ₹200 in retail. While farmers reported that they only got 30-40% of their usual yield, supply in markets had dropped by 70%. Beans continued to sell at over ₹100 per kg for a few months before it came down to ₹40 - 50 per kg.

The staple of every kitchen, tomato was also hit by the weather as the prices went as high as ₹120-130 per kg and as low as ₹10 per kg as the supply and demand balance was thrown off. After tomatoes reached record prices in 2023, many farmers planted the crop this year which created a glut in the market for some time and pushed the prices down.

For almost two years now, a kg of garlic is selling at anywhere between ₹300 - 500. The advent of Chinese-grown garlic into the State's markets also created some confusion among buyers as the variety which looks almost similar to the regular variety is reportedly harmful to health.

The bad streak continued for mangoes even this year. While experts had predicted that the yield this year will be around 10 - 14 lakh metric tonnes, it dropped by almost 70-80% due to pest attacks. The prices of the humble banana, capsicum, and carrots also breached the ₹100 per kg mark during different times of the year. Many farmers also switched from their horticultural crops and leaned towards commercial crops or agricultural crops this year due to their climate resistant qualities.

Cubbon Reads mulls taking legal path

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Cubbon Reads, the reading group whose Secret Santa event in Cubbon Park led to the detaining of its organisers by the police and Horticulture Department officials, is now mulling over taking the legal path by bringing together other groups and individuals who have faced similar problems in the park.

The organisers said in an Instagram post that following their experience at the park, many others reached out to them and shared that they were also affected by similar issues.

"We always wanted to remain a community, not turn into an organisation, but if needed, we will form an association and work towards filing a PIL for making parks more accessible for all creative activities, whether done solo or in a group," the statement said.

Campaign for adopting Indie dogs launched

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

'Santa Bow Wow 2024', an event to promote animal welfare, compassion and responsible pet parenting was held in Cubbon Park on Monday morning. The event was organised by CJ Memorial Trust (CJMT) and its #MillionIndiesHomed campaign, nicknamed 'The Mindie Project' which aims to find forever homes for one million Indian street dogs was also launched by Chief Secretary Shalini Rajaneesh.

The highlight of the event was a fashion show organised by fashion designer Prasad Bidapa where models walked the ramp with Indian street dogs.

This was followed by Indie pet parents walking the ramp with their pets, and sharing their stories.

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Verify R-no. under CRS
Check the authenticity of electronic products by entering R-no. (Registration) mentioned below the Compulsory Registration Scheme (CRS) Mark
Know Your Standards
Get information on any Indian Standard and licenses against it
Lodge Complaints
Register complaints regarding substandard products and spurious use of BIS Quality Mark
Laboratories
Get details of BIS Labs, empanelled labs and BIS recognized labs with provision to view their approved scope
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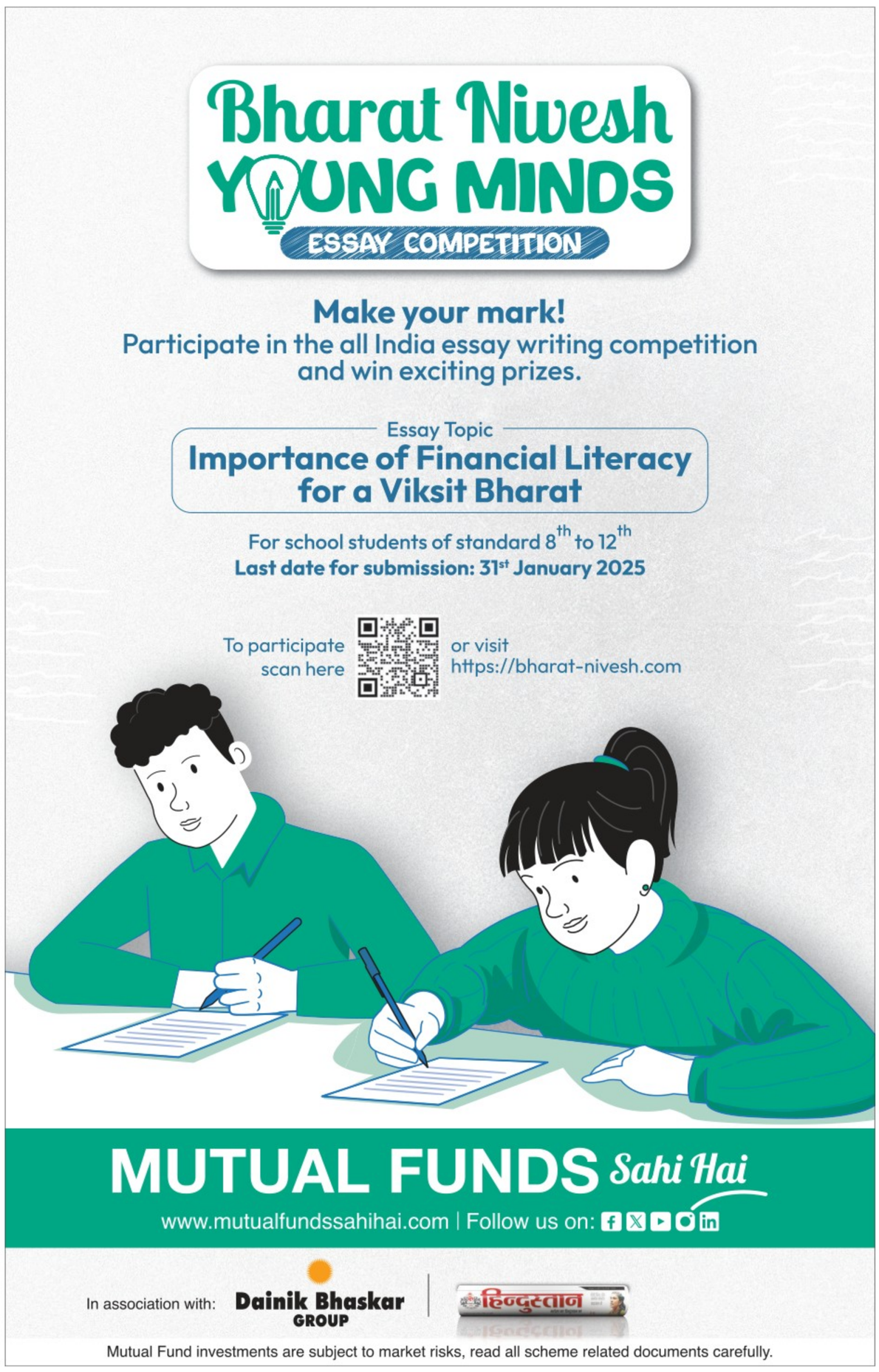
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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Manipur police recruits passing out from Assam Academy

2,000 Nearly 2,000 recruits of the Manipur police passed out from the Lachit Borphukan Police Academy on Monday, strengthening the force in the violence-hit northeastern State, an official said. PTI

Casualties suffered by North Korea in Russia-Ukraine war

1,100 More than 1,000 North Korean soldiers have been killed or wounded in Russia's war with Ukraine, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said on Monday. The new figure follows a report by Seoul's spy agency to MPs last week. AFP

Police personnel to be deployed in Prayagraj for Maha Kumbh Mela

50,000 The 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela will see a strong force of 50,000 police personnel fanning out across Prayagraj to respond to potential terror threats, cyber attacks, rogue drones and human trafficking. PTI

India's oil imports from West Asia in November

2.28 In billion barrels per day (bpd). India's November crude imports showed West Asian oil at a nine-month high while Russia accounted for its smallest share in three quarters. Refiners in India have been gorging on cheaper Russian oil. REUTERS

Highest-ever monthly traffic recorded in Lucknow Airport

6.29 In lakh. The Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport has managed an all-time monthly high of passenger movement in November. Dubai, Muscat and Dammam were the top three international destinations. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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India's reliance on China for critical minerals

Does China have unparalleled dominance in the critical minerals sector? How was it able to do so? What are the minerals for which India is heavily dependent on China? Why has India not been able to excavate the lithium reserves found in Jammu and Kashmir?

EXPLAINER

Rakshith Shetty

The story so far:

The Ministry of Mines in 2023 identified 30 critical minerals deemed essential for the nation's economic development and national security. While the report highlighted India's complete import dependency for 10 critical minerals, it did not fully address a more pressing concern – the extent and nature of dependency on China.

Is China a dominant player?

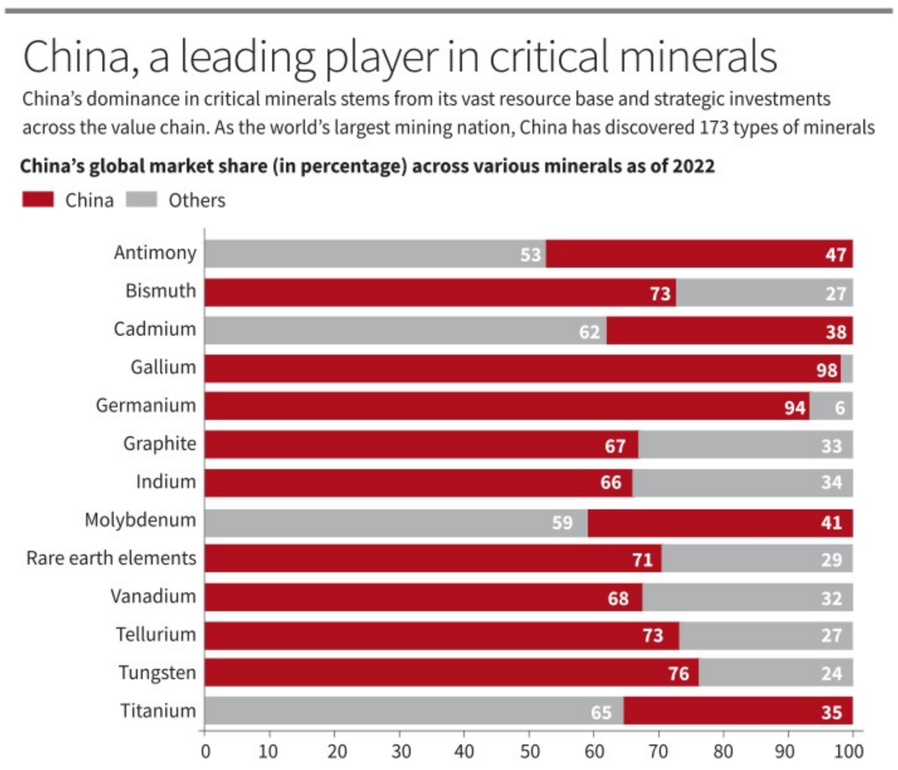
China's unparalleled dominance in critical minerals stems from its vast resource base and strategic investments across the value chain. As the world's largest mining nation, China has discovered 173 types of minerals, including 13 energy minerals, 59 metallic minerals, and 95 non-metallic minerals. Reserves of nearly 40% of these minerals, particularly copper, lead, zinc, nickel, cobalt, lithium, gallium, germanium, and crystalline graphite, increased significantly last year, supported by an exploration investment of $19.4 billion. This led to the discovery of 132 new mineral deposits, including 34 large ones. China's dominance extends beyond reserves to include processing and refining, with control over 87% of rare earth processing, 58% of lithium refining, and 68% of silicon processing. Furthermore, China has strategically invested in overseas mining projects and built unparalleled midstream refining capabilities, raising supply chain vulnerabilities for countries including India, the U.S., and EU nations.

What about China's export controls?

When it comes to China's approach to weaponising critical mineral exports, it is strategic and calculated. Beijing primarily targets minerals deemed critical by Western nations and their allies, especially those essential for semiconductors, batteries, and high-tech manufacturing. However, China carefully balances these decisions against two constraining factors: it avoids controlling minerals which heavily depend on Western raw material imports, and it refrains from actions that could disrupt its domestic industrial enterprises or export-dependent sectors. This strategic calculus was evident in China's 2010 rare earth embargo against Japan, its recent restrictions on antimony, gallium, and germanium exports, and its December 2023 ban on rare earth extraction and processing technologies.

Is India dependent on China?

An in-depth examination of import data of 30 critical minerals spanning 2019 to 2024 reveals India's acute vulnerability to Chinese supplies, particularly for six critical minerals where dependency exceeds 40%: bismuth (85.6%), lithium (82%), silicon (76%), titanium (50.6%), tellurium (48.8%), and graphite (42.4%). Bismuth, primarily used in pharmaceuticals and chemicals, has few alternative sources, with China maintaining an estimated 80% of global refinery production. Lithium, crucial for EV batteries and energy storage, faces processing bottlenecks, despite alternative raw material sources, as China controls 58% of global refining. Silicon, vital for semiconductors and solar panels, requires sophisticated processing technology that few countries possess. Titanium, essential for aerospace and defence applications, has diversified sources but involves high switching costs. Tellurium, important for solar power and thermoelectric devices, is dominated by China's 60% global production share and finally graphite, indispensable for EV batteries and steel production, faces supply constraints as China controls 67.2% of global output, including battery-grade material.


China, a leading player in critical minerals
China's dominance in critical minerals stems from its vast resource base and strategic investments across the value chain. As the world's largest mining nation, China has discovered 173 types of minerals
China's global market share (in percentage) across various minerals as of 2022
China
Others
Antimony 53 47
Bismuth 73 27
Cadmium 62 38
Gallium 98
Germanium 94 6
Graphite 67 33
Indium 66 34
Molybdenum 59 41
Rare earth elements 71 29
Vanadium 68 32
Tellurium 73 27
Tungsten 76 24
Titanium 65 35
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Why does India rely on imports?

Despite being endowed with significant mineral resources, India's heavy reliance on imports stem from several structural challenges in its mining and processing ecosystem. Many critical minerals are deep-seated, requiring high-risk investments in exploration and mining technologies – a factor that has deterred private sector participation in the absence of adequate incentives and policy support. The country's processing capabilities are also limited. This is particularly evident in the case of the recently discovered lithium deposits in Jammu and Kashmir, where despite the presence of 5.9 million tonnes of resources in clay deposits, India lacks the technological capability to extract lithium from such geological formations.

What is the way forward?

India has initiated a multi-pronged approach to reduce its dependency on China. The government has established KABIL, a joint venture of three State-owned companies, to secure overseas mineral assets. India has also joined strategic initiatives like the Minerals Security Partnership and the Critical Raw Materials Club to diversify its supply sources and strengthen partnerships. The country is also investing in research through institutions like the Geological Survey of India and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research while promoting recycling and circular economy practices to reduce virgin mineral dependency. Production-linked incentives for extracting critical minerals through recycling also seem promising. However, transitioning away from China will require sustained investment and long-term commitment to these various initiatives.

The writer is a research analyst at The Takshashila Institution.

THE GIST

- China's dominance extends beyond reserves to include processing and refining, with control over 87% of rare earth processing, 58% of lithium refining, and 68% of silicon processing.
- An in-depth examination of import data of 30 critical minerals spanning 2019 to 2024 reveals India's acute vulnerability to Chinese supplies, particularly for six critical minerals where dependency exceeds 40%.
- Despite being endowed with significant mineral resources, India's heavy reliance on imports stem from several structural challenges in its mining and processing ecosystem.

Why has the MHA reimposed restrictions in three NE States?

What is the protected area regime? What did the Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958 stipulate? Did the ethnic violence in Manipur lead to imposing restrictions on movement and mobility?

Vijaita Singh

The story so far:

On December 17, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reimposed the Protected Area Regime (PAR) in the States of Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram to restrict and monitor the movement of foreigners. From now on, foreigners visiting the three States would have to seek prior permission and Protected Area Permits (PAP) from the government. The circular stated that the relaxation provided to the three States under the Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958 was being withdrawn with immediate effect.

What does the 1958 Order entail?

The Order stated that no foreigner shall enter into or remain in any protected area except under and in accordance with a permit issued by the Central government or any office authorised by the Central government. The permit shall include the following details – place of entry, place of residence and period of stay. The areas falling between the inner line and the international Border of the following States and Union Territories were declared as Protected Areas – parts of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand and the whole of Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Sikkim (partly as protected areas and partly as restricted areas). Another Order in 1963 declared entire Andaman & Nicobar Islands and parts of Sikkim as "restricted area."

When was the Order first relaxed?

The PAR was relaxed for the whole of Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland on December 30, 2010 in wake of an improved security scenario, and to promote tourism. The relaxation was initially for a period of one year. It was subsequently extended for a duration of 1-2 years till 2022 when it was further relaxed for another five years till December 31, 2027. On December 17, the relaxation was withdrawn for the States.

Why was it withdrawn?

A copy of the circular accessed by *The Hindu* said that the matter was examined by the Ministry in "the backdrop of growing security concerns in border areas of these States." Manipur, bordering Myanmar has been affected by ethnic violence between the tribal Kuki-Zo and the Meitei people since May 3, 2023. Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has attributed the ongoing violence in the State to "outsiders and foreign hands."

After a military coup in Myanmar in February 2021, there was an influx of undocumented migrants – over 40,000 refugees took shelter in Mizoram and around 4,000 refugees are said to have entered Manipur. The migrants belonging to the Kuki-Chin-Zo ethnic group share ethnic ties with the communities in Mizoram and Manipur. India shares a 1,643 km long border with Myanmar which passes through the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, The Free Movement Regime (FMR) between the two countries, allowing movement of people living within 16 kms of the international border, was suspended by the MHA in January.

How does one obtain a PAP?

The permits can be secured from Indian missions, the MHA, district magistrates, resident commissioners of a State, Home Commissioners or Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) among others.

Like earlier, citizens of Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and foreign nationals having their origin in the three countries would continue to require prior approval from the MHA. All foreigners visiting these States will mandatorily register themselves with the Foreigners Registration Officer of the State or the District they visit within 24 hours of their arrival. Myanmar nationals visiting the three States, who till now were excluded from the requirement of obtaining a PAP if they had an e-tourist visa or any other visa, should compulsorily register with the FRRO within 24 hours of their arrival.

THE GIST

- On December 17, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reimposed the Protected Area Regime (PAR) in the States of Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram to restrict and monitor the movement of foreigners.
- A copy of the circular accessed by *The Hindu* said that the matter was examined by the Ministry in "the backdrop of growing security concerns in border areas of these States."
- From now on, foreigners visiting the three States would have to seek prior permission and Protected Area Permits (PAP) from the government.

From Page One

Laxmi Hebbalkar to complain to President, PM against C.T. Ravi

"Mr Ravi is glorifying himself by wearing garlands following the incident. That is because he feels guilty inside. It is shameful that most Bharatiya Janata Party leaders are backing Mr. Ravi. But I will not keep quiet. I will complain to the Chairman [of the Legislative Council] again. I will continue the legal fight against him. I hope the police investigation will progress and the FSL report is out soon," Ms. Hebbalkar said.

'Unreasonable claims'

"Mr. Ravi's claims that he was beaten up and tortured are unreasonable and meaningless. He should be ashamed of saying the police were planning a fake encounter. What injury is he showing as proof? Who knows how he got that injury? Now, the people of the entire State are criticising him. The police action is in line with established law. It is the BJP that is spreading lies about the case," she said.

Clips of Ravi's statements released

Ms. Hebbalkar released clips of Mr. Ravi's statements not only allegedly insulting her but also Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, by calling him a drug addict on the floor of the House.

To a query on Mr. Ravi's plans for a 'Chalo Belagavi' yatra, she said that anyone with a pure heart and peaceful attitude was welcome to her city.

Meanwhile, Basava Jaya Mrutyunjaya Swami of Kudalasangama Panchamasali peetha said he strongly condemned the alleged insult of Ms. Hebbalkar by Mr. Ravi. "I have condemned this in a meeting in Koppal on Saturday. The Panchamasali samaj units in various districts have condemned it too," he added.

9 projects with investment of ₹9,823.31 crore approved

While three are new proposals, six involve expansions or amendments to existing plans

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 64th meeting of the State High-Level Approval Committee under way under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Ministers M.B. Patil, Priyank Kharge, and N. Cheluvarayaswamy are seen. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The 64th meeting of the State High-Level Clearance Committee (SHLCC) chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday approved nine industrial projects with a total investment of ₹9,823.31 crore. The projects are expected to create approximately 5,605 jobs.

While three of these are new proposals, the remaining six involve expansions or amendments to existing plans.

The meeting approved new projects included DN Solutions India Pvt. Ltd.'s ₹998 crore investment at the ITIR, Devanahalli, expected to create 467 jobs; Silectric Semiconductor Manufacturing Pvt. Ltd.'s ₹3,425.60 crore project at Kochanahalli, Mysuru, aimed at generating 460 jobs; and Sansera Engineering Limited's ₹2,150 crore project at Harohalli in Bengaluru, which is estimated to create 3,500 jobs.

The six expansion projects included Musashi Autoparts India Pvt Ltd's ₹122.66 crore investment at Doddaballapura, creating 478 jobs; JSW Cement Ltd.'s ₹486.82 crore project at Toranagal, Ballari, generating 225 jobs; NIDEC Industrial Automation India Pvt. Ltd.'s ₹200 crore project at Belur, Dharwad, creating 150 jobs; Epsilon Carbon Pvt. Ltd.'s ₹740 crore expansion at Sandur, generating 325 jobs; K.B. Steels Pvt. Ltd.'s ₹852.49 crore investment at Hosapete, Vijayanagara; and Sify Data Managed Services Ltd.'s ₹847.74 crore project at the High-Tech Defence and Aerospace Park.

At the meeting, the CM announced that the first semiconductor project in the State would be established at the Kochanahalli Electronics Manufacturing Cluster near Mysuru.

Urging investors acquiring KIADB plots to operationalise their units within the prescribed timelines, he cautioned that penalties would be imposed on those failing to comply with the same.

He further added that the government is exploring the possibility of profit-sharing between sugar mills and farmers. Instructing officials to examine similar practices in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, he assured that industries operating within the framework of government regulations would be ensured.

Industries Minister M.B. Patil, IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge, and Agriculture Minister N. Cheluvarayaswamy and senior officials attended the meeting.

'If BJP pursues legal fight, police involved will be suspended'

RAVI ARREST CASE

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Alleging that the State government was misusing the police force to suppress political opponents, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, H.D. Kumaraswamy, asked why C.T. Ravi, BJP MLC, was taken around all night in Belagavi.

Speaking to presspersons at Haradanahalli in Holenarasipur taluk on Monday, he said Mr. Ravi was a people's representative. If he were to be arrested, the police should have presented him before the magistrate directly. "Where was the need to humiliate him? Who directed this?" he asked. He said if BJP leaders chose to take up a legal fight on the issue, police officers involved would be suspended.

Further, he said the Karnataka police had been a model to the country. However, recent incidents showed that it had lost its old glory. Officers had been acting as per the directions of politicians. "A few Ministers are giving directions to officers for their political benefit. Political opponents are being suppressed through abuse of power and violation of laws. These incidents show that the State might witness a worse situation in the coming days," he remarked.

Regarding Hassan, he questioned the contribution of Congress leaders to the district. "What is their contribution to Hassan, except for releasing CD?", he commented, referring to the alleged leaking of video clips of former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna.

Mr. Kumaraswamy said if Hassan district had seen any development, it was because of former Prime Minister, H.D. Deve Gowda, and former Minister H.D. Revanna.

"When I was CM, I fulfilled my responsibilities with regard to the needs of the district. Let me know what the Congress leaders brought to it?" he asked.

Mr. Kumaraswamy visited temples at Yaliyur in Channarayapatna taluk, Mavinakere, and Haradanahalli in Holenarasipur taluk. He was accompanied by Mr. Revanna and other party leaders.

DKS: Unfazed by BJP plan to protest during centenary fete of Congress Belgaum session

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar inspecting the preparations for the 1924 Belgaum session at the CPEd grounds with AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala in Belagavi on Monday. Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar is seen. P.K. BADIGER

The Congress is not afraid of the protests planned by the BJP on the day of the centenary celebrations of the 1924 Belgaum Congress session, D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister, said in Belagavi on Monday.

"We are in the midst of the centenary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi's visit to Belagavi to chair the 1924 Belgaum Congress session. It was a session that provided a clear road map to the freedom movement. The celebrations are not a party event. They belong to the world, just as Gandhiji belonged to the world. If someone mistakes it for a party event and plans to protest in Belagavi on the same day, we will not be bothered by it," he told reporters, during the visit of Congress leaders to Belagavi to review the preparations for the Centenary event.

"Why should we be afraid if anyone or any party tries to organise a protest on the day that we are feting a person known as Mahatma or Father of the Nation? We are least bothered. I am not dead. I am still alive, and leading the party. We will organise the celebrations in a way that befits the historic event," the Dy.CM said.

"Gandhiji led the freedom struggle, gave us a democratic republic, helped us get the national flag and the Constitution. A grateful nation has printed his image on currency notes as we need to remember him every day," he said.

Preparations reviewed

Meanwhile, AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, Mr. Shivakumar, Ministers Satish Jarkiholi and Laxmi Hebbalkar reviewed the preparations for the centenary celebrations of the 1924 Belgaum Congress Session, in Belagavi.

They visited the Veera Soudha, the venue of the session in Tilakwadi in Belagavi and the CPEd grounds where a public rally will be held on Friday.

Mr Surjewala said that the 'Belgaum session' was significant as it had turned the freedom struggle from a political agitation into a socially and culturally responsible movement.

Mr. Shivakumar added that the centenary of the historic Belgaum session, the only plenary chaired by Gandhiji, would be celebrated in a historic manner. We will discuss various social and political issues before the country today and think loudly about the future of the society and governance, he said.

He said he would respond to Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy's criticism of the Congress at a separate event in Channapattana and not in Belagavi.

TAMIL NADU INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
3rd floor, CMDA Building Tower-II, 'Thalamuthu-Natarajan Maaligai', No.1, Gandhi Irwin Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008
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Tender Notice No.e66/2024 Date 23.12.2024
Coimbatore Corporation
(Two Cover System-e-submission only) File No.3382/2024/ JN3

1. Bids are invited Removal of legacy waste through Bio/ Minning process at Vellalore dump yard in Coimbatore city municipal corporation (7,94,139 MT).
2. Total Estimate Amount **Rs.5854.00 Lakhs.**
3. The bid documents can be downloaded from the website **https://tntenders.gov.in** free of cost.
4. Amount of Earnest Money Deposit will be 1% of the estimated value of work.
5. Any additional/further details and conditions related to these works can be had from the office of the Commissioner, Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation.
6. **Important dates**

1.	Date and time of Pre Bid Meeting	**07.01 .2025 at 11.00 A.M**
2.	Last Date and time for downloading bid documents	**27.01.2025 at 3.00 P.M**
3.	Last Date and time for submission of bid document online e-submission only	**27.01.2025 at 3.00 P.M**
4.	Date and time of opening of the Technical Bids	**28.01.2025 at 4.00 P.M**

7. In the event of the specified date for submission of bids is declared as a holiday, bids will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time.
8. **Commissioner, Coimbatore Corporation, Big Bazaar Street, Townhall, Coimbatore–641001, Ph.No.0422-2396026, E-mail commr.coimbatore@tn.gov.in**

DIPR/5598/TENDER/2024 **COMMISSIONER, COIMBATORE CORPORATION**

IN THE COURT OF THE 28th ADDL. CITY CIVIL & SESSIONS JUDGE. AT BENGALURU
G & W.C: 25005/2024 (CCH-29)
BETWEEN/PETITIONERS :
1) MRS. VARSHA KRISHNAMURTY
W/o. Late Mr. Pradyuth E. Prasad, Aged: 43 years, R/at. No.78/2. Wheelers Road, Cox Town. Bangalore-560 005.
2) MASTER VIRAAT PRADYUTH,
(Minor being represented by their Mother Mrs. Varsha Krishnamurthy, Petitioner No.1 herein), S/o Late, Mr. Pradyuth E. Prasad, Aged: 14 years, R/at No.78/2, Wheeler Road, Cox Town, Bangalore-05.
3) MASTER KRISHNA PRADYUTH,
(Minor being represented by their Mother Mrs. Varsha Krishnamurthy, Petitioner No.1 herein) S/o Late. Mr. Pradyuth E. Prasad, Aged: 9 years, R/at No.78/2, Wheeler Road, Cox Town, Bangalore- 05.
AND / RESPONDENTS: NIL
PUBLIC NOTICE UNDER ORDER V RULE 20 CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE, 1908
Whereas, the above named Petitioners have filed a petition under Section 8(2) of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 read with Section 8 of the Guardian and Wards Act, 1890 praying for the appointment and declaration of Petitioner No.1, the biological mother of the Petitioner No.2 and the Petitioner No.3, as the de jure guardian over the person and property of Petitioner No.2 and 3 and also seek permission from this Hon'ble Court to permit Petitioner No.1 to Manage/ dispose allocate or exercise any right in respect to the share of Petitioners No.2 & 3 in their Late Father, Mr. Pradyuth.E Prasad's inheritance for their maintenance and welfare in the Schedule Property.
The Interested parties are hereby called upon to appear before the 28th Addl City civil and Sessions Court (CCH-29), Mayo Hall, Bangalore either in person or by pleader, duly instructed, **on 4th day of February 2025 at 11:00 AM** and to show cause against the Petitioners, failing which it will be heard and determined in your absence.
SCHEDULE 'A'
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Municipal No.78, 78/1, 78/2, 78/3 and 78/4 located at Wheelers Road, Bangalore- 560 005, Ward No. 79 admeasuring 7642.42 sq. ft. and bounded on the: **North By :** Conservancy Lane, **South By :** Wheeler Road, **East By :** Private Property, **West By :** Private Property.
SCHEDULE 'B'
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Municipal No.78 located at Wheelers Road Bangalore- 560 005, Ward No. 79 admeasuring 4890.17 sq. ft. and bounded on the: **North By:** Conservancy Lane, **South By:** Open Space and Wheeler Road, **East By :** Shed, **West By :** Property Nos. 78/1 and 78/2.
Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this **21 day of December 2024.**
By order of the court, Deputy Registrar City Civil Court, Bangalore
Kreioz Legal,
No.207 & 208, Regency Enclave, Magrath Road, Bangalore-560025.

Hubballi temple fire: Nine devotees suffer burns

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

In a fire reportedly caused due to a gas cylinder leak at a temple in Hubballi, nine Ayyappa devotees, including an 11-year-old boy, have suffered burns. Barring the boy, the condition of the others is said to be serious, as they have suffered over 70% burns.

The incident occurred early on Sunday, when the Ayyappa devotees were sleeping at the Shiva Temple in Achhavva Colony of Unkal in Hubballi after performing late night rituals and singing bhajans.

Leakage from the LPG gas stove is said to be the cause of the fire. Others woke up on hearing the screams of the devotees engulfed in fire and rushed them to hospital.

All nine who have suffered burns are being treated at Karnataka Medical College and Research Institute (KMC-RI) in Hubballi. The doctors say barring the boy with 25% burns, all others have suffered over 70% burns.

The victims are Vinayak Barker, 11, Prakash Barker, 36, Tejaswar Satri, 26, Shankar Chavan, 29, Lingaraj Biranur, 19, Manjunath Waghmode, 22, Nijalingappa Bepuri, 58, Raju Mugeri 16, and Sanjay Savadatti, 18, all residents of Sai Nagar, Hubballi.

Following the fire, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs Pralhad Joshi accompanied by MLA Mahesh Tenginakai, MLA Prasad Abbayya, DC Divya Prabhu G.R.J., Police Commissioner N. Shashikumar visited the hospital.

Director of (KMC-RI) S.F. Kammar said the injured are being treated in a separate ward and advanced healthcare is being provided. Mr. Abbayya, chairman, KSDB, said that steps will be taken to provide compensation from the CM's Relief Fund.

IIHR celebrates National Farmers' Day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Four farmers who have achieved excellence in growing IIHR's varieties and adopting improved technologies were felicitated by the ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural Research on Monday on National Farmers' Day.

A training programme on 'Improved technologies and varieties/hybrids was organised in which 70 farmers and about 80 students took part. Lectures on fruits, vegetables and flower crops were held.

Department of Health & Family Welfare
KARNATAKA STATE AIDS PREVENTION SOCIETY
Arogya Soudha, 4th Floor, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 560 023. Tel: 080-2955 7021
E-mail: pdksaps@gmail.com

No: KSAPS/PRC/08/2024-25 Date: 21.12.2024

Invitation for Short Term Re-Tender
(Two Cover) (Call-2) Through e-Procurement

Short term re-tender (Two cover)(Call-2) are invited for **Supply of Viral load consumables to ART Centers** under e-Procurement System. Details are available at e-Procurement website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Last date for submission of tender on **07-01-2025 at 5:30 p.m.**

Sd/-
Project Director
DIPR/CP/3922/MAA/2024-25 **KSAPS, Bengaluru.**

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

CHANDRA VIJAYARAGHAVAN (retd LIC) passed away on Sunday 22 Dec. at her residence in Chennai after a brief illness. She is survived by her daughter Shuba and son Bharathram. Mob – 9940626653/ 9840653410

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES

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CACHE

How does Google's GenCast AI, which predicts the weather, work?

Like ChatGPT can identify what the next word in an unfinished sentence could be, GenCast can guess what the future weather will be given the weather until some point

Vasudevan Mukunth

The story so far:
On December 4, Google DeepMind unveiled GenCast, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) model the company said could forecast the weather better than most existing tools as well as more days in advance. Details of the model were published in a peer-reviewed paper in the journal *Nature*.

How do we forecast weather?
"Weather predictions ... are produced by running multiple numerical simulations of the atmosphere," Vassili Kitsios, senior research scientist at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation of Australia, wrote earlier this month. "Each simulation starts from a slightly different estimate of the current weather. This is because we don't know exactly what the weather is at this instant everywhere in the world. ... By solving equations describing the fundamental physical laws of nature, the simulations predict what will happen in the atmosphere."

This process is called Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP). The best NWP forecasts require the use of powerful supercomputers as well as high-quality data about the weather at a particular location. Even then NWPs can predict the weather only a week or so in advance.

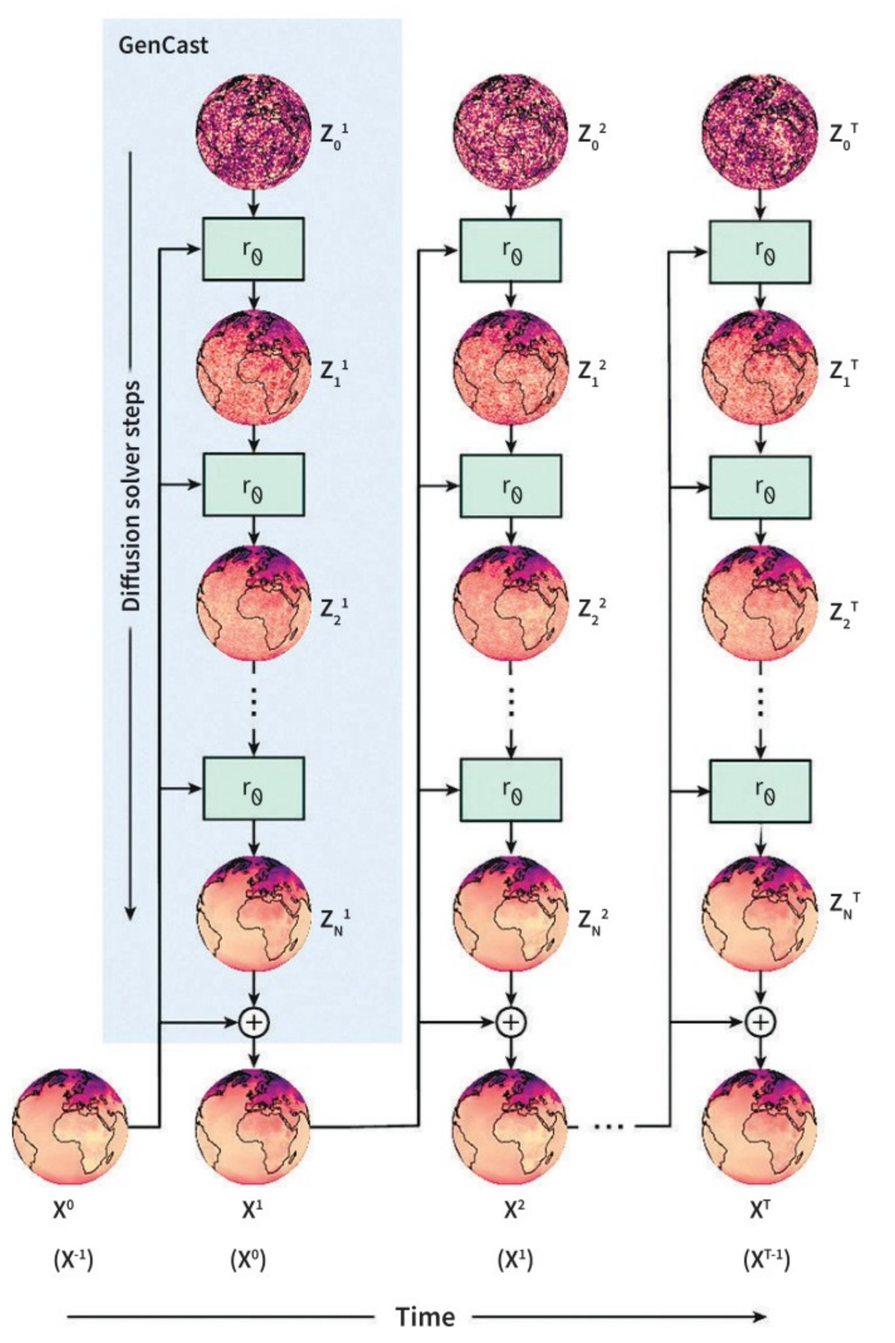
Ensemble forecasts entered the picture in the 1990s. Here, scientists use an NWP model to produce multiple forecasts at a certain location in time, with different starting conditions. This collection of forecasts is called an ensemble and indicates the range of meteorological possibilities.

How does GenCast perform?
Google's GenCast uses ensemble forecasting too but the options in the ensemble come from an AI model rather than an NWP. Engineers at Google trained this AI model on 40 years of reanalysis data, from 1979 to 2019. According to the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), "Reanalysis data provide the most complete picture currently possible of past weather and climate. They are a blend of observations with past short-range weather forecasts rerun with modern weather forecasting models."

GenCast was trained in two steps: step I in 3.5 days and step II in 1.5 days, both with 32 TPU v5 instances. 'TPU' is short for 'tensor processing unit', an integrated circuit Google developed to run machine-learning models, sold via Google Cloud. In December 2023, Google Cloud launched a TPU called v5p: it contains 8,960 chips interconnected with a bandwidth of 4,800 Gbps/chip, and costs $4.2 per chip-hour on demand.

Just like ChatGPT is good at identifying what the next word in an unfinished sentence could be, GenCast is good at guessing what the weather will be in the next moment given the weather until some point. According to the *Nature* paper, GenCast had "greater skill than ENS on 97.2% of 1,320 targets we evaluated and better predicts extreme weather, tropical cyclone tracks and wind power production." ENS refers to the ensemble forecasts generated by ECMWF, considered one of the best in NWP.

Google also said GenCast was more accurate than ENS on 99.8% of the 1,320 targets when asked to predict the weather more than 36 hours in advance.


The workings of an AI weather model
The AI model described in the paper in Nature had a neural network with 41,162 nodes and 2.4 lakh edges. Each node is a point in the network where some input data is accepted, manipulated, and an output is generated as the input for another node.
GenCast
Diffusion solver steps
Time

Schematic diagram showing how GenCast generates a forecast. PRICE, I., SANCHEZ-GONZALEZ, A., ALET, F. ET AL. PROBABILISTIC WEATHER FORECASTING WITH MACHINE LEARNING, *NATURE* (2024)

How does GenCast work?
The AI model described in the paper had a neural network with 41,162 nodes and 2.4 lakh edges. Each node is a point in the network where some input data is accepted, manipulated, and an output is generated as the input for another node. An edge is a connection between nodes.

For how this setup processes data, see the diagram above. The globes at the bottom show a weather prediction at four points of time, one after the other. Each prediction is generated by combining existing weather data with a noisy input. GenCast's challenge is to extract from the noisy input – the globes on the top – a weather prediction for the next moment in time. To do this, the model runs the combination through a refinement (green box), produces a less noisy prediction, then combines this again with the input data, runs a second refinement, then combines the new output with the input data, runs a third refinement, and so on until it finishes 30 refinements. The final de-noised output, called X1, is the final weather prediction for the next moment in time. To predict the weather for the moment after, the model begins by accepting X1 as the input and starts afresh with a noisy input. The green boxes have the neural networks.

The ability to de-noise a noisy input is a common feature of a diffusion-type AI model, which GenCast is. Other famous apps that use diffusion models include OpenAI's text-to-video model Sora and Stability AI's text-to-image model Stable Diffusion, both of which are also examples of generative AI.

GenCast produces at least 50 forecasts at a time for the ensemble, and Google has said each forecast can be produced in parallel. In all, the ensemble contains forecasts for 15 days at a time, with a spatial resolution of 0.25° x 0.25° (latitude-longitude) and temporal resolution of 12 hours. The researchers found this entire process took GenCast running on one TPU v5 unit eight minutes, much shorter than the several hours required by supercomputers for NWP.

GenCast was trained in two steps: step I in 3.5 days and step II in 1.5 days, both with 32 TPU v5 instances. 'TPU' is short for 'tensor processing unit', an integrated circuit Google developed to run machine-learning models, sold via Google Cloud. In December 2023, Google Cloud launched a TPU called v5

Will GenCast replace NWP?
GenCast's forecasts are probabilistic rather than deterministic, that is, "there will be 25% chance of rain in Chennai on December 25" rather than "there will be 5 mm of rain in Chennai on December 25". Current NWP models and their ensembles are deterministic. Experts have said probabilistic weather forecasts are better at revealing the possibility of extreme weather events.

"We should make more use of these probabilistic forecasts for extreme events instead of relying on quantitative predictions. Probabilistic forecasts provide more lead time, which can be used for better preparation," former secretary to the Indian government Madhavan Rajeevan wrote in *The Hindu* in December 2023.

This said, while GenCast's performance suggests AI weather models will soon surpass the abilities of NWP models, both NWP and GenCast are founded on more fundamental weather data still acquired using the laws of physics.

Experts have said understanding the weather using these laws remains important because the weather is changing rapidly in many parts of the world, in ways in which historical weather conditions can't prepare us for.

GenCast itself requires more reanalysis data to train itself. As Google said in a public statement: "We deeply value our partnerships with weather agencies, and will continue working with them to develop AI-based methods that enhance their forecasting.

Meanwhile, traditional models remain essential for this work. For one thing, they supply the training data and initial weather conditions required by models such as GenCast." The code to run GenCast is available on GitHub.

DeepMind has also been working on a model called GraphCast to develop "deterministic medium-range forecasts". Google Research has been developing a model called NeuralGCM that combines AI and NWP models to generate deterministic forecasts, and at least two other models to predict extreme floods and to quantify forecasting uncertainties. Elsewhere, Huawei's Pangu-Weather model can predict the weather one week at a time with accuracy comparable to NWP but much faster. Nvidia's FourCastNet model can already outperform a state-of-the-art NWP facility at ECMWF at predicting extreme rainfall, in less than two seconds.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian
S. Upendran

"Why is writing difficult?"

"Real language is spoken language. Almost everybody acquires his/her mother tongue and speaks it satisfactorily. We speak much of the time. But very few write. Writing is a skill you develop with more and more writing. Writing came into being after invention of the alphabet. We reduce into writing what we want to say, what we feel. So many thoughts crowd into our mind. They don't come to us one by one. Normally, when we write, we choose one thought at a time and give it a linear form. There is a spontaneity in speech, It is not there in writing. Before we write, we sit down and think of what we should write. It is a mental activity. I am not talking about inspired poets and others who say that they don't think and write but words flow through them and they write them down. We are not talking about such people. We are talking about those who want to write letters, articles, etc. When we are asked to say orally what we want to, we do it reasonably well. When we are asked to put it down in writing, we find some difficulty. We worry or must worry about clarity, simplicity and the appropriate vocabulary. We look at the ceiling, scratch our head hoping for the right word to fall from heaven! We write, rewrite, chop and change. Writing is a wrestle with words. Every sensitive writer feels what Eliot says in 'East Coker':

So here I am in the middle way, having had twenty years...
Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which
One is no longer disposed to say it. And so each venture
Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
With shabby equipment always deteriorating
In the general mess of imprecision of feeling,
Undisciplined squads of emotion."

"So each venture is a new beginning, raid on the inarticulate. But this is true only of great writing, Isn't it?

"It is true of all writing. The moment you start writing, you realise how true it is. You write and rewrite because you are dissatisfied. You feel you have not conveyed adequately what is in your mind."

"O.K. So the first rule says that I should use familiar words and not pompous, far-fetched words."

"Yes."

"What does the second rule say?"

"We'll take it up next week."

Published in The Hindu on November 1, 1994.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on the occasion of the birth centenary of the legendary singer Mohammed Rafi

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Rafi's first public performance was at the age of 13, when he was allowed to sing at a concert featuring which famous singing star of the era?

QUESTION 2
His vocal talents were discovered when he entertained customers while indulging in what profession?

QUESTION 3
Name the song composed by Husnlal Bhagatram that he rendered immediately after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi that touched a chord with PM Nehru?

QUESTION 4
Rafi recorded around 7,405 songs in all genres during his wonderful career and won many awards. For which song did he get his only national award in 1977?

QUESTION 5
Why is the number 'Tasveer Teri Dil Mein' from *Maya* infamous in Rafi's career?

QUESTION 6
Which Rafi number was used in the soundtrack of the Hollywood flick *Ghost World*?

QUESTION 7
What is the significance of these lines 'Tere aaney ki aas hai dost, Shaam phir kyun udaas hai dost, Mehki mehki fiza yeh kehti hai, To kahin aas paas hai dost' from a song in *Aas Paas*?

Visual question:
This screenshot shows the first on-screen appearance of Rafi in the song 'Tera Jalwa Jisne Dekha'. Name the film.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This person said that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was "the greatest revelation in the Spanish language since 'Don Quixote'". **Ans: Pablo Neruda**
2. García Márquez began giving his manuscripts to this person before submitting them. **Ans: Fidel Castro**
3. García Márquez consider this his "true profession". **Ans: Journalism**
4. García Márquez considered this as an exceptional piece of work in journalism. **Ans: 'Hiroshima' by John Hersey**
5. García Márquez wanted this novel to be destroyed, but his sons published it a decade after his death. **Ans: *Until August***
6. García Márquez considered this his most important book from a literary viewpoint. **Ans: *The Autumn of the Patriarch***
Visual: The location of this statue. **Ans: Aracataca**
Early Birds: Sonali Das| Tito Shiladitya| Tamal Biswas| Piyali Tuli| Sumana Dutta

Word of the day

Requite:
make repayment for or return something

Synonym: repay

Usage: *She did not requite his love.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/requitepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɹɪ'kwaɪt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

St. Andrew's Church. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Holy Trinity Church. K. MURALI KUMAR

Bengaluru's oldest churches tell stories of a layered history

While the city races toward the future, its oldest churches serve as reminders of Bengaluru's colonial past and much more

Darshan Kumar
BENGALURU

Beyond Bengaluru's tech corridors and busy streets lie its oldest churches, where every brick holds a story from the colonial past, and every tradition bridges past and present.

Bengaluru, strategically located between Mangaluru on the west coast and Chennai on the east, became an important outpost for the British. As a result, it only made sense for the soldiers who settled here to establish a few Anglican and Catholic churches. Meanwhile, the Wesleyan missionaries who were focused on "educating" the local population for their social upliftment, also found the time to set up a few churches alongside their mission.

While the city races toward the future, these churches serve as gentle reminders of Bengaluru's layered history. Sunil Pichamuthu, a renowned historian specializing in South Indian Christian heritage, unravelled the layered history of the city's oldest churches.

A file photo of a Passion Play being enacted to mark Good Friday at the St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral in Coles Park.

Hudson Memorial Church. SUDHAKARA JAIN

St. Basilica church illuminated ahead of Christmas celebrations. SUDHAKARA JAIN

First church

St. Mark's Cathedral, the oldest church in Bengaluru, was established in 1808. Initially 100 feet in length, 50 feet in width, and 20 feet in height, its modest dimensions mirrored the size of ships from that era. It underwent a major expansion in 1898, transforming into the grand structure it is today.

An interesting trivia about this cathedral is that it began as a garrison church for the Madras Army officials serving under the East India Company. A cornerstone of the city's colonial history and Christian heritage, the cathedral remains a vital place of worship and community gatherings.

It houses one of the best-maintained church bells in India, which serves a functional purpose and stands as a symbol of the cathedral's rich musical tradition. As Pichamuthu notes, nearly 4,000 people visit the church every Christmas evening, drawn by its spiritual and historical significance.

Church for the migrants

St. Mary's Basilica, located in Shivaji Nagar, began as a simple thatched hut built by Tamil Christian migrants in the 17th century. When these migrants reached Bengaluru to settle, they found that the land was fertile to sow rice. They built a thatched hut and named it as 'Chapel of Kanikkai Matha.'

It was consecrated as a church in 1882 and later elevated to a minor basilica due to its historical significance. More than a place of worship, it has become an iconic landmark known for its Gothic architectural style, stunning stained-glass windows, intricate motifs, and ornate interiors. Today, it remains a significant place of worship and a major attraction in the city.

Hudson Memorial

Hudson Memorial Church, over 110 years old, is a tribute to Rev. John Hudson, a key figure among Bengaluru's Anglican community. Built to honour his life and work, the church has become a central hub for Anglican worship in the city. It hosts various community events throughout the year, strengthening its role as a spiritual and cultural gathering place.

The church is also renowned for its fascinating stained-glass windows painted by artists from London, adding a touch of artistic elegance to the hallowed space. Today, it remains a significant place of worship and a major attraction in the city, continuing to inspire devotion and unity.

'One station, one church'

Holy Trinity Church, established in 1852, was born out of a protest against the East India Company's policy of 'One Station, One Church'. Over the years, many prominent figures from the British Empire, including Winston Churchill and Lord Cornwallis, visited the church. Its interior still houses several original items brought from London, such as the bell, pulpit, and baptismal font, all of which continue to be in use today.

Known as the most significant military church in South India, it stands as a significant Protestant landmark in Bengaluru, attracting both worshippers and history enthusiasts alike.

St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral, initially established in 1851, underwent significant renovations and reconstruction, with its current form completed in 1932. Built with granite, the cathedral blends European architectural styles; it is designed in the shape of a cross, featuring a large central dome and two smaller white-and-blue domes added during its platinum jubilee in 2009.

The original church was founded by Father Chevalier, its first parish priest. In the early 1900s, Father JB Servanton took the initiative to rebuild the church after the old tower's cross fell in 1905, signalling the need for a new structure. Father Servanton held fundraising events like concerts and dramas, eventually completing the church after delays due to World War I. Dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, today, the cathedral serves as one of the city's main centres of prayer for the Roman Catholic community, hosting numerous weddings, baptisms, and religious events throughout the year.

Scottish roots

St. Andrew's Church, named after the patron saint of Scotland, has a history spanning over 150 years. Built between 1864 and 1866, this Presbyterian church reflects the traditions of its Scottish roots. Its striking Gothic architecture, highlighted by stained glass windows, adds to its charm.

Located in Shivaji Nagar, one of the city's most vibrant centres for shopping and street food, the church has witnessed Bengaluru's transformation over the years, standing as a quiet symbol of faith amidst the bustling modern landscape. According to Pichamuthu, each and every bench and chair in the church has been there since the beginning.

He also shared an interesting story about the church's maintenance. Once, a problem arose with one of the pillars, so the church authorities called in experts for inspection. They suggested digging two wells near the church to improve the groundwater level and ensure proper maintenance of the building.

St. Patrick's Church

St. Patrick's Church, established in 1841, is the second-oldest Catholic church in Bengaluru, built initially to serve the Irish community. Over time, it has grown into a significant landmark in the city. The church showcases elegant neo-Gothic architecture, with high arched entrances, granite steps, and twelve pillars representing the twelve apostles of Jesus.

In 1845, the Bishop of Mysore designated it as his cathedral, further solidifying its importance. Located on Brigade Road, a major shopping and commercial hub in the city, St. Patrick's Church is known for its serene ambiance and active community involvement. The site, once used by Mysore soldiers, became the ideal location for this historic church.

As Christmas approaches, these historic churches stand as silent witnesses to the ever-changing landscape of Bengaluru. Once built to serve the needs of colonial settlers and missionaries, they have transformed into centres of worship, community, and festivity for the larger Christian community of Bengaluru today. As the city around them becomes a high-rise jungle of modernity, these churches remain grounded in history, starkly contrasting the fast-paced, consumer-driven world outside.

Civic body launches initiative on sustainability

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's Climate Action Cell unveiled a series of innovative initiatives on Saturday at a public meeting in the city. The CAC showcased its plans to advance Bengaluru's climate agenda through collaboration, technology, and public participation.

Key initiatives included the launch of "Nisarga," a chatbot developed with CGI and the Bengaluru Political Action Committee (B.PAC) to provide easy access to the Bengaluru Climate Action Plan.

Officials also introduced the Rooftop Solar Explorer Tool, created by CSTEP, which enables residents to assess solar energy potential on rooftops and align with renewable energy goals.

Turning grief into life: Two families in Bengaluru choose organ donation after tragedy

'Sandhya wanted to dedicate her life to society, even in her passing, she has saved countless lives,' says her family

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The city recently witnessed two acts of selflessness, as the organs of individuals who tragically lost their lives were donated to save others.

The first instance involved 25-year-old Sandhya, whose family chose to honour her commitment to serving others through organ donation after she succumbed to a life-threatening brain injury. The young doctor from Devanahalli had a bright future ahead. On December 6, her life took a tragic turn when she was involved in a road accident while riding a two-wheeler with her father. She struck a road divider, suffering a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Manjunath V.

Sandhya

Rushed to Manipal Hospitals on Old Airport Road, she underwent emergency brain surgery to remove a large clot caused by the accident. Despite the best efforts of medical professionals, her condition worsened, and she was declared brain-dead on December 9.

Dedication to society

Inspired by her dedication to society, Sandhya's family donated her organs. Her lungs, kidneys, liver, corneas, heart valves, skin, and tissues were donated, potentially saving or improving many lives. Reflecting on their decision, her family members said, "Sandhya wanted to dedicate her life to society, serving the downtrodden and improving access to healthcare in rural areas. Even in her passing, she has saved countless lives."

The second instance involved 48-year-old Manjunath V., a blind man who became an organ donor following a tragic road accident. On December 15, he and three of his visually impaired companions were crossing Mysore Road near Kadamba Hotel in Kumbalgod when they were hit by a six-wheeler lorry. While two of his companions escaped with minor injuries and another suffered a broken shoulder, Manjunath sustained severe head trauma.

Allocated to recipients

He was taken to Gleneagles BGS Hospital, where doctors fought to save him. Despite their efforts, he was declared brain-dead on December 16. At this critical moment, his family made the decision to donate his organs. His kidneys, liver, heart valves, and corneas were successfully retrieved and allocated to recipients through the Jeevasarthakathe organ donation network.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 24, 1974

Family Planning: Minister Wants Accent on Persuasion

Bangalore, Dec. 23: The country's very survival and development of a great extent depended on the success of the family planning programmes, the Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Mr. Devendrappa Ghalappa Jamadar said here yesterday.

Inaugurating the World Population celebrations at the Institution of Engineers auditorium, Mr. Ghalappa said that the unchecked birth was threatening to nullify the country's economic development. The population explosion was even hampering their struggle against poverty and hunger and was even impairing realisation of human rights.

Despite the fact that the family planning programme had been taken up as a national programme and was being implemented all over the country, the targets fixed were eluding fulfilment. The family planning programme unlike other programmes was a sensitive programme as it dealt with private and intimate aspects of people and hence a cautious approach was needed and accent should be persuasion. He said that another factor which was responsible for the tardy progress of the programme was that it was being looked upon as a Government programme.

CITYBEATS

All specials

DECEMBER 25
A Christmas menu will be available at Suzy Q till January 1 with signature dishes like sriracha-glazed bacon-wrapped prawns, turkey roulade with spinach and chestnut stuffing, plum cake, and a cocktails like Santa's kiss, velvet orchard, and hot buttered rum. *At Suzy Q, Queens Road. Call 47250088 for reservations.*

Spiced 'n' nice

DECEMBER 25
Daysie All Day casual bar unveils a Christmas menu with live music. You can dig into dishes like creamy broccoli and cheddar tartlets, spiced pumpkin cheesecake, herb-infused spinach and citrus ricotta cannelloni, pistachio-crusted stuffed rack of lamb. *At Daysie All Day Casual Bar, MG Road and RR Nagar. Call 918040210000 to book your table.*

Raise a toast

ONGOING
This Christmas menu includes butternut squash soup, appetizers like mushroom fricassee, summer garden mini tarts, cheese platter with bread rolls. Roasted duck leg with duchess potato and crispy pork belly with bacon rosti for mains and ginger bread cake, yule log for dessert. *At Topic, Craft Bar & Kitchen, till December 30. Call 9844166866.*

All about the base

Singer-songwriter Sruthi VJ talks about her EP *Better Love* and its making

Ruth Dhanaraj

"I'm one of the crazies who quit the corporate world and jumped back to my artistic side during the pandemic," says Sruthi Vijayachandran, better known as Sruthi VJ. The singer-songwriter, who shuttles between Bengaluru and California, recently released her debut EP, *Better Love*.

During a three-way call with Sruthi in California and her producer Richard Andrew Dudley in Bengaluru, she talks about her journey of the past four years.

"Richard and I began collaborating during the pandemic, doing a series of mash-ups and covers. He had a lot more time as there were no live gigs at the time and we were able to get some music out, which was quite well received," she says, adding, "Soon enough, Richard was encouraging me to write and compose my own material."

"The interest to write songs was always there as I always had an interest in poetry and limericks. This was a way to do it in a focused, more professional manner."

"My parents realised quite early that I had a inclination for music, so I began in Carnatic lessons at the age of five, that was my foundation. Later on, while studying in Christian institutions, I was part of the choir. Participating in musicals and singing acapellas helped me hone my skills in Western music too," says the former Mount Carmel College student.

With such a base for her music and lyrics, Sruthi branched off in different directions, not confining herself to one style or genre. "I've utilised what I know to apply myself in different styles and in *Better Love,* the songs are about how different relationships have an impact on one's personal growth and identity."

"Right from the nurturing comfort of home to the bitter-sweetness of growing up and meeting other people along the way – the songs trace that journey and while no two of them are alike, the common thread is that journey of growth and evolution."

Sruthi released her first single titled 'Jee Bar Ke', in 2022, a blend of Indian and Western elements, which was followed by 'Snatch To Me', a tribute to survivors of gun violence in America. Now, *Better Love* comprising five songs, is out on all streaming platforms.

"Working with Sruthi has been interesting because of what we bring to the table. She brings the lyrical and creative content, and for me as a producer that's a delight, because I am free to create the arrangements, decide on instrumentation and the rest," says Richard, who runs Moksha, a music academy in Bengaluru.

He goes on to add how Sruthi's versatility is bound to take her places. "There are not too many artistes who can switch between languages with ease. She may not be fluent when speaking different languages, but when she sings, her articulation is great," he says, adding that she was in the leagues of Shriya Ghoshal and Jonita Gandhi.

"I am a Malayalee, so Malayalam comes to me naturally and since I grew up in Tamil Nadu, I'm quite comfortable with Tamil and Hindi. I've also tried languages I'm not so familiar with such as Kannada, Bengali and Telugu," says Sruthi. She goes on to share how she has detailed calls with friends to ensure she gets her diction right.

"I get inputs from people who are well-versed in that language because however pretty a song sounds, it does not matter if it does not sound relatable to somebody who speaks that language. And I always try to go into the meaning of what I'm singing to help me perfect the sounds. A lot of groundwork happens before I reach the recording studio."

Richard says it is every artiste's dream to have somebody singing their songs. "When I hear some of my students singing Sruthi's songs word for word, it gives me so much joy. Whether it's one or 1,00,000 that's the journey – to hear somebody repeating what you have created and relate to it – that is all an artiste can ask for."

As for Sruthi, she says, "Next, I'm going to focus on live gigs to take my music out there. That's something Richard and I have planned for 2025 as well as releasing new music and trying multilingual songs."

In the competitive league Sruthi VJ with producer Richard Andrew and (above) the EP cover. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The resilient ones A range of tubers and (below) a woman from the Dongria Kondh tribe in Odisha showcasing the East Indian arrowroot. PRACHI RATHI

Indian tubers and urban dining

Prachi Rathi

I recently attended the Rooting for Tubers festival hosted Spudnik farms by in Bengaluru. After seeing the varieties of Indian indigenous tubers there, it made me realise how we underestimate the nutritional value of tubers. These foods are nutrient-rich root vegetables like potatoes, sweet potato, tapioca and yams.

This was the third edition of the Rooting for Tubers festival, an initiative to raise awareness about the diversity, adaptability, and climate resilience of tubers. The festival brings together urban consumers, farming communities, academicians and food enthusiasts to exchange knowledge, and celebrate the potential of these often-overlooked crops. Guests could try these tubers in traditional recipes, and participate in workshops.

This year's festival showcased more than 45 types of indigenous tuber varieties across India. Each state has its own special tubers. For example, the Kunbi community in Uttara Karnataka grow and use Kunbi mudali (a type of colocasia) and vaate huli (also known as monkey jackfruit). A few other tubers from the north Karnataka region are shankalu (jicama) and kasar alu (tannia), found in the Joida region of the state.

In Odisha, Dongria Kondh tribe from the Niyamgiri hill range grow curuma ungustifolia, commonly known as the East Indian arrowroot. Closer to home in coastal Karnataka and parts of Kerala one can find the Chinese potato, locally known as zaad kanaga.

Speaking about the initiative, Sumeet Kaur, founder of Spudnik Farms, explained, "We are trying to present tubers more in an urban format by collaborating with Central Tuber Crops Research Institute. Focusing on developing products like chips, *papad*, noodles, cookies, and pasta, that can seamlessly fit into everyday meals."

The festival celebrates the cultural heritage of tubers and also positions them as sustainable and versatile foods.

Where to source tubers?
If you are looking to incorporate more indigenous vegetables into your diet but are not sure where to source them, Spudnik Farms is a good place to start. Based in Bengaluru, they offer a farm-to-home delivery service, providing fresh, organic produce straight to your doorstep. They also have weekly subscription boxes with varieties of vegetables, including tubers. Start incorporating tubers into your daily diet with mudali rava fry using mudali tuber from Western ghats.

Food of the future

As climate change continues to challenge agricultural systems globally, the production of staple crops like rice, wheat, corn and soybean is affected. In these uncertain times, climate-resilient crops such as tubers stand out as a reliable alternative. Tubers do not require any expensive farming equipment, fertilisers or irrigation systems. These are versatile crops that can withstand any climatic and soil conditions. Beyond resilience, tubers have been a vital source of nutrition, especially in the developing countries of Asia, Africa and South America. For centuries they have consumed these as an important part of their diet and also culinary traditions .

The health benefits of tubers

Karishama Shah, who is a Mumbai-based integrative nutritionist and health psychologist, says "Tubers are an excellent source of fibre and are packed with vitamins and micro-minerals. They are most beneficial during winters and offer various health benefits to both men and women." For women, tubers play a significant role in hormonal health, Shah explains, "They are particularly helpful for women going through menopause, as they balance hormones. Women with PCOS or low progesterone levels can also benefit from tubers like sweet potatoes and yams as they are natural sources of progesterone". Additionally, tubers also help in boosting immunity, improving bone health, supporting heart health and are great for the gut too.

Needful things

In the age of modernity, there is still a section that looks to the past and holds on to all things antique.

An ongoing exhibition and sale of antiques may be the destination for this crowd.

The exhibition, which will be on till December 31, is organised by Antique Home Decor, and aims at reviving and promoting the forgotten art of wicker cane weaving, the craft of weaving cords or willows.

The products on display include rare sofa sets in teak and rosewood, coffee tables, side stands, cabinets, chairs and a lot more of varieties of furniture with wicker cane weaving inlay.

There is also a seasonal offer of a 20 % discount on selected pieces.

The showroom, located in Poojapura, has a display of furniture and home decor and accessories for any furniture enthusiast.

There is also a display of rare collections of antique shelves, desks, bar consoles and dining sets with special appliqués of mother of pearl, brass and more.

Besides these, they are also desks and chairs that transform to serve multiple purposes.

Antique Home Decor was started by engineer-turned-entrepreneur, Ambu Adithya Sadasivan, who has a passion for antique furniture.

His business has grown to other cities including Chennai, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram and now Bengaluru.

The Bengaluru branch is located at #1, UmaShankar Avenue, Opposite Carmel Teresa School, Hagadhur Road (near Forum Neighborhood Mall, Whitefield). Call 9846085350 for details.

INBRIEF

Telangana HC dismisses actor Mohan Babu's bail petition

The Telangana High Court dismissed the petition of actor Mohan Babu who sought anticipatory bail on health grounds in the case of attack on a TV journalist. Mr. Mohan Babu's counsel sought anticipatory bail submitting that he was suffering from health problems related to heart and also issues related to nerves. The Public Prosecutor, however, opposed the bail petition. Counsel informed the court that Mr. Mohan was in Tirupati monitoring his educational institutions.

Mr. Mohan Babu was booked for attempt to murder when he hit a TV journalist with a mike badly injuring him. The journalist was one among many who went to the actor's house to cover an altercation between him and his younger son Manoj over family disputes.

Ex-ADGP's report on Pooram disruption claims conspiracy

CPI, Congress question timing of leaking of confidential report; the report says 'saboteurs' aspired to deal political blow to Kerala govt. before LS poll; CPI seeks a three-tier probe into the disruption

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The report denies accusations that the police had stopped Pooram and impeded the movement of Devaswom members. FILE PHOTO

Former Additional Director-General of Police, Law and Order, M.R. Ajith Kumar's report into the 'disruption' of the Thrissur Pooram has pointed to a conspiracy allegedly hatched by some persons in the Thiruvambady and Paramekkavu Devaswoms to politically coerce future administrations to yield to the 'unlawful' demands of festival managers.

The CPI and the Congress have questioned the "timing of the confidential report's leak" and strongly disputed its contentious findings. Notably, the report denied accusations that the police had stopped the Pooram, entangled with festival enthusiasts, hobbled religious rituals, and impeded the movement of Devaswom members.

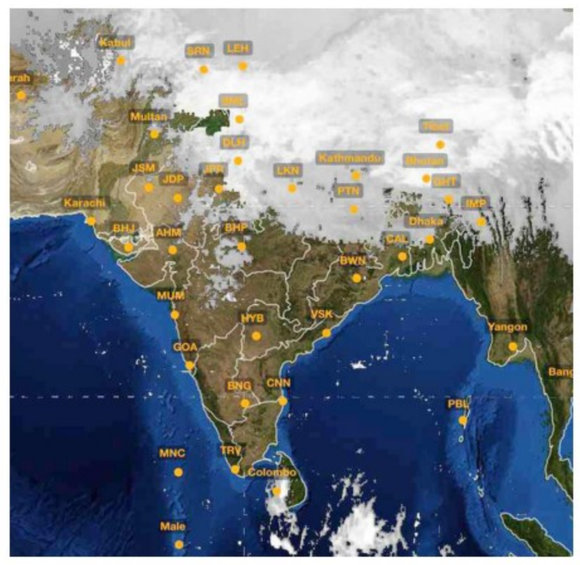
Instead, it chose to blame some Devasom officials for making unlawful demands, including allowing the public into the sterile zone demarcated to ensure public safety during the fireworks display.

The ADGP's report claimed the 'saboteurs' aspired to deal a political blow to the government by turning public sentiment against the administration ahead of the Lok Sabha polls ostensibly for stonewalling the Devaswom's demands to bend the rules governing the conduct of religious mass gatherings, especially those involving fireworks displays and other pyrotechnics.

CPI leader V.S. Sunil Kumar termed the report superfluous and irrelevant. He told *The Hindu* that the government instituted a three-tier investigation into the Pooram disruption, including conspiracy and policing lapses, after it found Mr. Ajith Kumar's report wanting.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Odisha, Coastal Andhra Pradesh & Yanam, Rayalaseema, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal. Cold wave conditions likely in parts of Himachal Pradesh, isolated pockets of Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad, Punjab and Haryana-Chandigarh.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	27.4	11.6	Kozhikode	—	33.6	23.8
Ahmedabad	—	26.8	17.8	Kurnool	—	33.0	21.2
Aizawl	—	28.1	8.4	Lucknow	—	23.7	8.2
Allahabad	—	25.4	10.0	Madurai	0.2	30.6	22.7
Bengaluru	—	29.5	20.5	Mangaluru	—	30.5	22.3
Bhopal	—	25.2	10.2	Mumbai	—	29.0	22.0
Bhubaneswar	—	27.5	17.9	Mysuru	—	—	—
Chandigarh	—	23.2	6.2	New Delhi	—	17.8	9.4
Chennai	—	29.8	22.6	Patna	—	23.9	12.5
Coimbatore	—	32.8	20.2	Port Blair	—	29.9	26.3
Dehradun	—	14.1	6.7	Puducherry	—	31.0	22.2
Gangtok	—	14.0	6.9	Pune	—	28.4	14.7
Goa	—	—	—	Raipur	—	29.0	16.9
Guwahati	—	25.5	11.3	Ranchi	—	26.0	11.5
Hubballi	—	30.0	19.0	Shillong	—	17.4	5.6
Hyderabad	—	29.4	19.3	Shimla	4	8.2	5.4
Imphal	—	23.4	6.1	Srinagar	—	2.8	-3.6
Jaipur	—	20.6	13.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.1	24.1
Kochi	—	30.8	23.6	Tiruchi	—	30.3	23.4
Kohima	—	21.3	4.5	Vijayawada	—	31.3	19.6
Kolkata	—	25.8	16.2	Visakhapatnam	—	24.7	21.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	9	41	32	298	152	
Bengaluru	8	15	57	53	96	
Chennai	16	32	27	37	62	
Delhi	14	75	61	476	430	
Hyderabad	4	104	51	91	130	
Kolkata	10	47	18	176	128	
Lucknow	9	36	60	330	299	
Mumbai	7	—	2	227	140	
Pune	—	112	19	58	64	
Visakhapatnam	9	61	27	35	37	

Yesterday

High levels of particulate matter pollution recorded in most cities across the country. Going by Central Pollution Control Board data, Delhi the worst with PM2.5 pollution levels touching a dangerous 476. Rohtak was a close second with PM10 readings of 361.

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Archbishop of Bengaluru seeks 'five gifts' for Christians from PM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Seeking "five gifts to the Christians in India" from Prime Minister Narendra Modi that would make the community happy, the Archbishop of Bengaluru Peter Machado on Monday urged the former to to put an end to the covert harassment of the community through "anti-conversion bills" being brought in 12 states across the country. He also sought direction to the States to adopt a benign attitude and give room for real freedom of religion in the country.

"The spate of enactments of the anti-conversion bills in India is hurtful and disturbing. Why should the Christians in India be considered 'foreigners', discriminated against and persecuted in some parts of country, even after 2000 years of Christianity in India? Twelve States of the Indian Union have passed anti-conversion bills; in some States, ostensibly named as Freedom of Religion bills. The obsession of the party in power to pass anti-conversion laws is unexplainable," he said in a statement here ahead of the Christmas festivities.

The Archbishop pointed out: "The laws themselves having stringent provisions, defy logic and can be even faulted with human rights violations, as they touch the core of liberty, choice of partners in marriage, youth and women in particular."

Accusations of conversions, he said, have hurt Christians, as their invaluable contributions in health, education and social services, become suspect to the extent of being totally disregarded in this charged atmosphere. "There are enough laws in the country to deal with fraudulent and incentivised conversions."

Other gifts sought

Among the other "gifts", he said was resolving the Manipur issue. He said that Christians in Manipur have received a raw deal since the onset of the civil war, and unfortunately the place has not merited a visit from the Prime Minister, even up to now, though he is known for resolving of problems and peace-making efforts in the war-torn countries of the world.

Urging the Prime Minister to stop all attacks on Christians and their institutions, he said that the Delhi -based United Christian Forum has recorded 767 incidents in 2024 targeting Christians and 80 Christians are behind bars for professing their faith. The Archbishop also sought constitutional provisions for Christians of SC/ST origin. "Are the Christians and Muslims of SC/ST origin not citizens of this country with equal rights and privileges guaranteed to all in the country according to our constitution?"

"The Christians in India wait for the Prime Minister to be gracious enough to make the Pope Francis's visit to India a welcome reality in 2025 by following up on the invitation extended earlier."

E-Procurement cell Office of the Executive Officer Nagar Parishad Mihijam, Jharkhand
Urban Development & Housing Department
E-Tender Corrigendum Reference No. - **NIT No. - 05/2024-25, Date:-17.12.2024**
PR No- 342257
Corrigendum – 1

Sl.no	E TENDER Ref no.	As per NIT	To be read as
1.	NPM/SBD/05/24-25	1. Date of Publication of tender on website-20.12.2024 2. Closing date and time for receipt of tender on website-28.12.2022 at 11:00AM 3. Opening date and time of opening of technical bid-30.12.2024 at 11:00AM	**1. Date of Publication of tender on website-23.12.2024** **2. Closing date and time for receipt of tender on website-30.12.2024** **3. Opening date and time of opening of technical bid-31.12.2024**

All other Details will be same as published in tender.
Note: Authority reserves right to cancel or amend tender without assigning any reason thereof.
Further details can be seen on website **http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in**
Executive Officer
Nagar Parishad Mihijam
PR 342722 Urban Development and Housing(24-25)D

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL
(Affiliated to CBSE New Delhi)
K. Kamaraj Road, Bangalore - 42 Tel: 080-25581238
www.apsbangalore.edu.in

JOB OPPORTUNITIES – PERMANENT POST

(PREFERRED CANDIDATES WHO ARE HAVING AWES OST EXAM (ONLINE SCREENING TEST) SCORE CARD WITH MIN OVERALL RAW SCORE OF 50% (100 MARKS))

1. Post Graduate Teachers (PGT) in Mathematics, Informatics Practices, History, Psychology & Fine Arts: For Senior Secondary Classes (XI & XII) Qualification: Post Graduate in the subject and BEd/MEd with at least 50% marks in each. **Note:** (a) PGT Informatics Practices – At least 50% marks in aggregate in BE/BTech/MCA/MSc in Computer Sci/IT.
(b) PGT Fine Arts – Post Graduate Degree/Master Degree in the subject with at least 50% in aggregate.

2. Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT) English and Science: For Secondary Classes. Qualification – Graduate in the subject and BEd with at least 50% marks in each and qualified in CTET or TET with 60% marks.

3. Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT) Physical Education (FEMALE CANDIDATES PREFERRED): For Secondary Classes. Qualification – Graduate in the subject and BEd with at least 50% marks in each.

4. Primary Teacher (PRT) – All Subjects: For Primary Classes to teach all subjects. Qualification – Graduation with D.El.Ed/B.El.Edn/BEd at least 50% marks in each and Passed in CTET or TET with 60% marks.

5. Primary Teacher (PRT) – Physical Education (FEMALE CANDIDATES PREFERRED): Graduate in Physical Education or B.P.Ed with at least 50% marks.

Eligibility: (a) Age: below 40 years for fresh candidates and below 57 years for candidates with experience. (b) **Computer Literacy** is mandatory for all the posts. (c) Proficiency to teach in **English medium** is mandatory. . (d) Preferably candidates who are qualified in AWES OST is preferred. **(e) Pass in CTET/TET is mandatory for posts Sl No. 2 & 4.** (f) **Interviews only** for short listed candidates, tentatively in Feb 2025. (g) NO TA/DA admissible. Download **Application Form from: www.apsbangalore.edu.in ONLY HARD COPY APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED.** Submit filled in Application Form along with all enclosures self attested along with **Rs. 250/- (Rupees Two Hundred and Fifty)** only DD in favour of "ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL" on or before **25 Jan 2025.**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites bidders to participate in the E-Auction for the following works:

E-Auction Notification Catalogue No.: MPS-TNGL-2024
Name of the work with its location
The award of contract for the Multi Purpose Stall at Toranagallu (TNGL) Railway Station for a period of Five (5) years with the provision of one time renewal of Three (3) years on satisfactory performance.
Date & Time of E-Auction:
From 11:30 am to 12:00 pm on 06.01.2025

E-Auction Notification Catalogue No.: MPS-GGVT-2025
Name of the work with its location
The award of contract for the Multi Purpose Stall at Gangavathi (GGVT) Railway Station for a period of Five (5) years with the provision of one time renewal of Three (3) years on satisfactory performance.
Date & Time of E-Auction:
From 11:30 am to 12:00 pm on 07.01.2025

For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in (E-Auction Portal)

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/ Hubballi
PUB/647/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.EEE/ AEE(O)/MWD/TKR/2024-25/5428-32 Date: 23.12.2024

PUBLIC AWARENESS NOTIFICATION

Name of the Work: Establishing 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Sub Station at Belaguli in Chikkanayakanahalli Taluk, Tumakuru District by constructing 110kV LILO line from existing 110kV KB Cross-Huliyar SC line for a distance of 1.350 Kms in Chikkanayakanahalli Taluk, Tumakuru District.

Areas 110KV Line passing through: Tumakuru District, Chikkanayakanahalli Taluk, Handanakere Hobli, Belaguli & Devarahalli villages.

Hence, hereby intimating that the public in above mentioned villages should not climb towers, not to touch any metal piece/ wire, tree branches etc. to the line conductor and should not tie the cow, buffalos to the towers. **The above said line will be charged on or after 24.12.2024**. If any accident occurred due to negligence of public by doing above said activities KPTCL will not be responsible.

Sd/- Executive Engineer Ele,
Major Works Division, KPTCL, Tumakuru.

THE HINDU IN SCHOOL PRESENTS SCHOOL BUZZ
A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

TWINS DAY CELEBRATED

Amara Jyothi English School celebrated Twins Day, highlighting the unique bond shared by twins through fun-filled activities with active participation from students across grades. The event concluded on an eco-friendly note, with Principal Smt Sai Kumari distributing Tulasi saplings to students, symbolising growth, purity, and well-being. The celebration fostered a spirit of togetherness, creativity, and environmental awareness, making it a memorable occasion. Twins Day successfully encouraged camaraderie and left a lasting impression on all participants, making it a cherished event for the school community.

FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATED

Kendriya Vidyalaya Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru celebrated the 62nd Foundation Day of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan in the Vidyalaya campus. Alumni Prof Siddarth Gadgil, Smt Tilottama Srinivasa, and Smt Brinda Verma were honoured by Principal Smt Amrutha Bala and Headmistress Smt R. Sunitha. Retired staff Smt Sudha Ramesh and Sri Vinayak Bhat were also felicitated. The event featured cultural performances, including Manipuri and Garbha dances, which captivated the audience. Principal Smt Amrutha Bala highlighted KVs' commitment to quality education and excellence, reflecting the institution's distinguished history and mission.

ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATED

NHVPS celebrated their Annual Day, Ekatvam – The Coming Together of Natural Elements, with vibrant performances highlighting the harmony of nature. Principal Mrs Anita Vinodkumar, in her address, emphasised the profound influence of natural elements on our thoughts and actions. Presented in a Gurukul setting, the event featured enchanting dances and skits, with Agni Kanya's sword dance and the heart-warming Punyakoti performance as highlights. Trustee Secretary Ms Aisshwarya DKS Hegde praised teachers' dedication in preparing students. The grand finale celebrated the unity of nature, marking the event as a resounding success.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Raghavendra Desai:
Handphone:+91 9986196254 | Email: desai.rnb@thehindu.co.in

यूनियन बैंक ऑफ इंडिया **Union Bank of India**
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम — A Government of India Undertaking

JAYANAGAR MAIN BRANCH
#429/31, Ramakrishna Building,30th Cross, 4th Block, Jayanagar Bangalore-560011.

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Sub: Notice of 15 days for sale of immovable secured assets under Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised officer of **Union Bank of India** (secured Creditor) will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is basis"** on the date mentioned below, for recovery of dues as mentioned hereunder to Union bank of India from the below mentioned Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit are also mentioned hereunder.

1. Name and address of the Borrower, Co-Applicant and Guarantor: **(1) Ms. G K Shobha** W/o K N Udaykumar, No.439, IV Main, Shashtri Nagar, Bangalore-560028. **(2) Mr. K N Udayakumar** S/o K S Nagaraja Rao, No.53B, DDA Flats, Dilshad Gardens, New Delhi-110095. **Also At:** K N Udayakumar S/o K S Nagaraja Rao Manager, CADDS, Bharat Electronics Ltd., Maharajpur, Ghaziabad (U.P.)-201010.

Amount due: Rs.6,38,397/- (Rupees Six Lakhs Thirty Eight Thousand Three Hundred and Ninety Seven Only) as on **03.02.2020** plus subsequent interest and charges.

Description of immovable secured assets to be Sold: All that Residential flat bearing No. P 211, in level Two (First floor) in Block 'P' of 'Ittina Mahaveer' built in Sy No.156/2 and 101 situated in Doddatoguru village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore, Bangalore South Taluk (Now Bangalore East taluk) and measuring 589 Sq ft of super built up area inclusive of proportionate share in common areas, passages, lobbies, staircase and other areas of common use together with 176 Sq ft undivided share, right, title, interest and ownership in the land referred above and bounded by: East: Remaining portion of Sy No.101, West: Property in Sy No.102, Nort: Road and remaining portion of Sy No.156, South: Boundary of Anekal Taluk. The Boundaries of the Flat No.P 211 is: East: Corridor; West: Open Space; North: Flat No.210; South: Flat No.212.

Reserve Price : Rs.26,34,000/-
(Rupees Twenty Six Lakhs Thirty Four Thousand Only)
Earnest Money to be Deposited: Rs.2,63,400/-
(Rupees Two Lakh Sixty Four Thousand Four Hundred Only)

Date and time of E-Auction: 10.01.2025, Friday from 12:00 Noon to 05:00 pm. (with 10 min unlimited auto extensions)
Last date for submission of EMD: before End Time of Auction
E-auction website: https://baanknet.com

For Detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in **https://baanknet.com**
The online E-auction will be held through website: **https://baanknet.com**
For auction related queries e-mail to **support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com** & **8291220220** or **ubin0537942@unionbankofindia.bank** & contact at Ph No. **9372137940.**

Date: 23.12.2024
Place: Bangalore
Sd/- Authorised Officer
Union Bank of India.

THE HINDU GROUP
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REWIND 2024
TRIVIA QUIZ
DAY 24

Which foreign leader attended India's 75th Republic Day celebrations as the chief guest, and what unique air display was showcased to mark the occasion?

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Answer to yesterday's quiz:
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Yesterday's Winners:
Manisundaram SV, Chennai | **Shiv Shanker Goyal,** Hyderabad | **Shruti Kukreti,** New Delhi

Selective indecision

The latest GST Council meeting's outcomes signal a capricious approach

Well into the eighth year of India's revamped indirect tax regime, the apex body governing the system met last Saturday and unveiled a flurry of decisions – including some rate changes and clarifications – that were punctuated by some broader issues it chose to kick down the road. That the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, with the Centre and States on board, had to wait for its 55th gathering to figure out that it needed to clarify that pepper and raisins supplied by farmers, gift vouchers and penalties levied on borrowers by banks and non-banking finance companies, are not taxable, is instructive. Similarly, the switch to a three-tiered levy for something as banal as popcorn – despite the rationale of taxing sweetened varieties more in the name of health – after all these years, is worrying. Such moves neither reflect well on the Centre's claims around its hurried July 2017 rollout that the GST is a 'Good and Simple Tax', nor does it bode well for a meaningful overhaul of its multiple and complex rates' structure through a long-delayed rationalisation exercise.

That the Council also did not bother to consider initial recommendations of a ministerial panel tasked with rejigging the GST rates, nor take up a panel's suggestions to review life and health insurance policies' taxation despite a commitment to expedite this rethink, only diminishes expectations from the panel going forward. That the panel's head left the meeting early, stating it will hold further deliberations on insurance policies' levies soon, is not comforting, if not entirely casual – especially as the government has been promising action on this front since the Budget session. The dithering, for whatever reason, is beginning to hurt the industry too. In November, new life insurance business tanked for the first time this year as consumers held off on buying a cover in anticipation of a GST cut. The longer this indecision, and the feet-dragging on the broader rate rationalisation plan, launched over three years ago, persists, the worse will be the implications on consumption that has already turned tentative, and private investment plans that hinge on consumption as well as tax certainty. The Council's decision to reverse an October verdict of the Supreme Court letting realty players claim input tax credits on costs of construction for commercial structures intended for renting or leasing purposes, will also have ramifications on India's investment climate. With legal changes to take retrospective effect from July 2017, this is a blast from the past for investors spooked by similar taxation misadventures over the past decade.

Canary in the canopy

Economic growth cannot be allowed to bypass environment laws

Through history, forests for humans have been sites of shelter, food, livelihoods, protection, and strength of spirit. According to the new *India State of Forest Report 2023*, 25% of India's land is covered by forests or trees, on its face a healthy figure and a step closer to the National Forest Policy's prescriptions. But big numbers always hide problems. Post-Independence, India's forest governance has been typified by attempts to break free from European colonialists' insular view of forests as sources of timber, codified in laws the country inherited. Two significant achievements in this regard were the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 and the Forest (Rights) Act 2006. The counteracting forces of industrial development and the pressures of climate change on the state have however troubled the implementation of both Acts and the government has, sadly, chosen the easy way out.

Courts and conservationists have demanded that the state follow the dictionary definition of forests whereas the administration has been muddying it to exclude "community" forests, among others, while including plantations and orchards. Even if the administration's impetus is murky, it is allowing India to claim it is growing its carbon sink towards its climate commitments while allowing developmental activities to continue unimpeded. Thus, the 25% figure hides forest cover loss in the biodiverse Western Ghats, the Nilgiris and the northeast, the shrinking of mangroves in the Kutch and the Andamans, and of 'moderately dense' forests and the ongoing endangerment of open natural ecosystems. The report also lacks details about whether its estimates of the carbon sequestration potential of degraded land account for the specific uses to which they are currently being subjected. Forest loss in biodiverse areas cannot be adjusted with new plantations elsewhere, the consequences of which are exacerbated by the decision to include even commercial plantations, which have lower sequestration and ecological value, and the continued use of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act. Indeed, the growing gap between theoretical and actual forests also extends to finances. In several northern districts, the extent of forest cover that suffered fire losses has increased by an order of magnitude in two years. Ground reports by *The Hindu* have documented a paucity of human resources, skill, and equipment to control fires. Economic growth is essential and trees will be lost, but this is precisely why the friction that laws impose on the growth impulse is essential too. Yet, the government has been weakening environmental safeguards – more recently, the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act 2023 further contracted the 1980 Act's purview – and distorting its official inventory of forests. It is hard to imagine anyone winning in the end.

India's 'steel frame' does need a check

Vinod Bhanu

the Director of the Centre for Legislative Research and Advocacy, New Delhi

India's governance challenges demand urgent reforms to modernise its bureaucracy. The country's economic story, which is marked by significant strides in growth and innovation, is juxtaposed with enduring issues of income inequality, underinvestment in critical sectors, and bureaucratic inefficiency. Central to this narrative is the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), which has for long held sway over the nation's governance. However, persistent challenges within the IAS and the wider bureaucracy have highlighted the urgent need for administrative reforms to unlock India's true economic potential.

The legacy and challenges of the IAS

The IAS, often called India's "steel frame", traces its origins to the colonial Indian Civil Service (ICS). Post-Independence, it became the backbone of India's administrative machinery, with officers occupying pivotal roles in governance. Yet, this legacy has not been without its cracks. Political interference, lack of specialisation, and outdated personnel practices have gradually eroded its effectiveness.

One of the pressing issues is the politicisation of the IAS. Frequent transfers, suspensions, and promotions influenced by political loyalty rather than merit, have undermined morale and professionalism. Officers often struggle to develop domain expertise due to frequent rotations across departments, preventing them from becoming effective policy specialists in an increasingly complex governance landscape.

Corruption and inefficiency plague the bureaucracy further. According to the World Bank's measure of government effectiveness, India ranks only moderately, reflecting the poor quality of policy implementation and administrative independence. Without reform, these systemic inefficiencies threaten to stymie India's economic growth and governance objectives.

Executive-led governance in India, characterised by centralised decision-making, has yielded mixed results. While it has facilitated rapid economic reforms and infrastructure development, it has also led to bottlenecks in policy implementation and a lack of accountability. The centralised power structure often sidelines bureaucrats' insights and expertise, reducing their ability to act as effective policy executors.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the government has attempted to address some of these shortcomings by curbing politicised transfers and introducing measures to enhance bureaucratic accountability. However, critics argue that centralising power in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) risks undermining the autonomy of senior bureaucrats, leading to further disempowerment of the IAS.

> Persistent challenges within the Indian Administrative Service and the wider bureaucracy have highlighted the urgent need for administrative reforms

The need for administrative reforms in India is not new. Since Independence, over 50 commissions and committees have been tasked with reimagining the country's administrative apparatus. The First Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) in 1966 and subsequent commissions, have consistently emphasised the need for specialisation, accountability, and merit-based promotions within the bureaucracy.

The Second ARC, set up in 2005, laid out a blueprint for administrative reforms. It included recommendations for lowering the permissible age of entry into the civil services, introducing performance-based promotions and lateral entry, and establishing safeguards against arbitrary transfers. However, many of these recommendations remain unimplemented, stalled by bureaucratic inertia and political resistance.

Government's push for reform

Recognising the limitations of the IAS-centric administrative model, the Modi government has sought to diversify governance by introducing lateral entry into senior bureaucratic positions. This move is aimed at bringing domain experts from the private sector and other government services into key policymaking roles, infusing fresh perspectives and specialised knowledge.

Since 2018, the central government has pursued lateral recruitment to bring individuals with specialised knowledge and domain expertise into specific assignments. By 2023, this initiative saw the appointment of 57 officers, many of whom were drawn from the private sector, reflecting a deliberate effort to infuse fresh talent and perspectives into governance. The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) recently advertised 45 posts for lateral entry, including positions for Joint Secretaries and Directors across various ministries. This shift has disrupted the IAS's traditional dominance, with only 33% of Joint Secretaries at the Centre now belonging to the IAS, compared to near-total dominance a decade ago.

However, the lateral entry initiative has faced resistance. Critics, including retired civil servants, argue that it could undermine incumbent morale and distort promotion incentives. Opposition parties have also voiced concern about the lack of reservation provisions for marginalised groups in these appointments. The Modi government's recent U-turn on lateral entry appointments, reportedly due to political pressure from political allies, underscores the contentious nature of this reform.

The U.S.'s proposed Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), under U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, offers an intriguing model for reforming India's administrative apparatus. DOGE aims to streamline government operations, reduce inefficiency, and eliminate redundant agencies, all while leveraging the expertise of leaders such as Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy.

DOGE's focus on cutting wasteful expenditures and introducing accountability mechanisms resonates with the challenges faced by the Indian bureaucracy. A similar advisory body in India could help identify inefficiencies within the civil service, promote data-driven decision-making, and develop metrics to assess bureaucratic performance. A time-bound commission, such as the DOGE's expiration date tied to the U.S. semi-quincentennial, could also ensure that reform initiatives remain focused and actionable.

Challenges to reform

Reforming India's bureaucracy is no small task. Despite its flaws, the IAS remains deeply entrenched in the country's governance structure. Proposals for lateral entry, performance-based promotions, and specialised training often face resistance from within the service, where seniority-based progression and generalist approaches are deeply institutionalised. Political interference further complicates reform efforts. Proposals such as the Civil Services Standards, Performance, and Accountability Bill (2010), which sought to protect bureaucrats from arbitrary transfers, have languished in legislative limbo. Even judicial interventions, such as the Supreme Court of India's directive to establish civil services boards in 2013, have had limited impact due to lack of enforcement.

A multifaceted approach to administrative reform is vital to address the challenges of India's bureaucracy. Recruitment must prioritise merit and domain expertise, with promotions tied to measurable performance rather than seniority. Protecting bureaucrats from politically motivated transfers and fostering specialisation in policymaking roles would enhance accountability and efficiency. Further, the government should invest in a robust data infrastructure to track bureaucratic performance, enabling informed decisions on placements, promotions, and policy implementation. Reform is essential for India's economic aspirations and ensuring governance effectively serves its people.

The GATT-ification of the World Trade Organization

Prabhash Ranjan

Professor and Director, Centre for International Investment and Trade Laws, Jindal Global Law School

The Geneva-based World Trade Organization (WTO), which serves as a multilateral trade referee, is set to miss yet another crucial target of revitalising "a full and well-functioning dispute settlement system" by the end of 2024. It has been five years since the Appellate Body (AB), the second tier of the WTO's two-tier dispute settlement system, has been non-operational due to the persistent blocking, by the United States, of the appointment of the Appellate Body members.

This obstruction began during Barack Obama's administration, escalated under Donald Trump's first presidency, and has continued under President Joe Biden, reflecting a bipartisan political consensus in the U.S. The U.S.'s hostile stance towards the Appellate Body will intensify further under what is anticipated to be a highly protectionist Trump 2.0 administration. While the WTO panels, the first stage of dispute settlement, continue to operate and render decisions resolving trade disputes between WTO member countries, this is of little significance because the losing country uses its legal prerogative to appeal to a non-operational AB, and thus stall the adjudicatory process. However, it is a fool's errand to put the Appellate Body back on track because the real issue is the WTO's existential crisis and its quest to be a relevant player in global trade. The larger game is not about killing the Appellate Body but, rather, making the WTO dysfunctional.

The promise

To understand the future, it is important to first reflect on the past. The establishment of the WTO in 1995 marked a milestone in international law. The rise of neoliberal ideology in the 1990s played a critical role in this development. The WTO established a comprehensive system of rules governing trade in goods, services, and intellectual property, along with a binding two-tier dispute settlement system featuring an appellate function, compulsory jurisdiction, and effective retaliation for non-compliance. The WTO's promise of international rule of law was so compelling that it could not be matched even by the International Court of Justice. Scholars in international law began to regard the WTO as a constitutionalism project that would ensure the triumph of international law over international politics.

> The legal revolution of international trade multilateralism is being reversed

As the international trading community witnessed the transition from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) era that held sway from 1948 to 1994 to the WTO, it marked a shift from diplomacy-based trade multilateralism to a rule-based system. Celso Lafer, a former Chairman of the WTO's dispute settlement body, described the creation of the WTO as the "thickening of legality" in international trade relations. Put differently, countries were willing to accept several restrictions on their state conduct and subject themselves to the binding jurisdiction of the WTO's dispute settlement system including the Appellate Body.

The unravelling

However, things began to unravel as the global landscape changed due to China's significant rise over the last two decades. The U.S. facilitated China's accession to the WTO in 2001, hoping this would lead Beijing to dismantle its state-led industrial policies which were detrimental to international trade, and adopt free-market principles. However, this expectation did not materialise. There is a widespread belief in the U.S. that China exploited the WTO system to its advantage. The WTO and its institutional controls hinder the U.S. from dealing decisively with China. As a result, the U.S. aims, in the words of international lawyer Daniel C.K. Chow, to "wreck" the WTO system, including the Appellate Body, which would provide it with a free hand to address the perceived Chinese threat. The U.S. can now employ trade remedial measures and develop industrial policies to counter the Chinese challenge, even if these actions violate WTO law, as there is no one to call it out. A classic example of this is the Trump administration's decision in 2018 to impose a 25% tariff on Chinese products across various sectors. Mr. Trump's promise to impose further tariffs during his second term, which could trigger another round of trade war, indicates that international politics, rather than international law, will dictate international trade.

Regime change

This has led international lawyers such as Geraldo Vidigal to argue that there is no longer a crisis in the WTO but a regime change. As against the thickening of the legality of international trade relations that we saw from a period of 1995 to 2019, we are witnessing its thinning. In other words, while there is no complete de-legalisation of international trade relations, countries are reclaiming significant control that was previously ceded to the WTO in managing their state conduct. The legal revolution of international trade multilateralism that began in 1995 has not only been paused but is being reversed, moving us back to the era of GATT diplomacy. Understanding this "GATTification" of the WTO, as Prof. Vidigal puts it, is crucial for grasping the current state of the international trading order. No amount of technical negotiations in Geneva can obscure this fact.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Centralisation push

A single election diminishes the role and priorities of the States and can only marginalise them. The drive towards 'one nation, one election' (ONOE) is to have India as a unitary, unidimensional, single-language nation, which it certainly is not. We are one because we are different. ONOE is essentially to dislodge regional parties as they appear to have stymied the Bharatiya Janata Party's expansion moves. This push from the government leads to needless structural imbalance and a disruption of the concept of cooperative federalism. 'One nation, one election' is another step towards the centralisation of many aspects of administration and schemes. The 'cost' angle is unclear, as to date, the savings for simultaneous polls have not been quantified.

H.N. Ramakrishna,
Bengaluru

Rural employment scheme

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is meant to eliminate seasonal unemployment in the agrarian sector. Put differently, the services of farmers/agricultural labourers during the lean season are utilised in the said scheme to create infrastructural assets in rural areas. It is disheartening that corruption plagues the scheme in West Bengal (Page 1, December 23). India is a federal country, and it is imperative that the Union government and States work in unison to ameliorate the economic condition of the poor in rural and urban areas. Politics, red-tapism and corruption are least expected in labour-intensive and socio-economic welfare programmes.

S. Ramakrishnasayee,
Chennai

Music season, safety

This time of the year, Chennai is busy with its annual *Marghazi* music season. City residents and non-resident Indians alike throng the numerous *sabhas*, enjoying music and the other performing arts apart from tasting exotic food items despite their being exorbitantly priced. But what is not so great about the situation is that many of the *sabhas* are not implementing the required statutory fire safety regulations, putting lives at risk. Statutory fire safety regulations such as smoke detection systems and alarms, unimpeded passage ways, fire evacuation plans and strategies, and, importantly, trained employees to handle a possible fire outbreak, are conspicuously absent in many of the *sabhas*.

It is a common sight that when popular artists perform, people are allowed to sit on staircases. More chairs are brought in to seat more people, blocking all escape routes. The live kitchen adjoining the auditorium in many places is another potential fire hazard!

The authorities concerned should, in the interest of public safety, inspect the various performing centres and have the required fire safety protocols implemented immediately.

B. Swaminathan,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Envisioning India as a global skill supplier

S.K. Sasikumar

Labour and migration analyst and former senior faculty, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute

In an address in August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that he was hopeful that India's skilled workforce will play a prominent role in the global job market.

Global mega trends, such as demographic transitions, globalisation, technological advancements, and climate change, are significantly altering the demand for, and the supply of, international migrant workers. Among the various facets of such changes, the skills of these workers are assuming centrality in public policy discourse.

Reviews of immigration policies of the traditional and major migrant destinations (the U.S., the U.K., Canada, and Gulf Cooperation Council countries) and of the new destinations (Germany, South Korea, Japan, etc.) reveal the increased prioritising of skill-selective and skill-intense immigration. Most of the destination countries recognise that their ability to respond to certain developments, such as an ageing society, digitalisation, declining fertility rates, and the need for economic diversification strategies to tackle the challenging global economic environment, can be met only by welcoming international migrant workers with the relevant skills.

Can India rise to the occasion and bridge the global skills gaps? Responding effectively to the skill needs of different destination countries is a complex task. Robust and evidence-based policy interventions are essential to facilitate skill-centred international labour migration outflows from India.

Fragmented policy structure

However, India still lacks a comprehensive policy architecture for international labour mobility. The policy interventions are fragmented and are often not based on evidence. The only data source for annual migrant labour outflows from India is the data on emigration clearances, which covers only those with an educational attainment below matriculation and low skilled workers migrating to 18 select countries. Such data inadequacy stands as a major obstacle in formulating constructive polices.

India's efforts have mostly revolved around bilateral agreements on international labour mobility with different countries covering aspects such as social security, skills, protection, and welfare. These are primarily one-off exercises, not situated within a composite policy framework. Further, there are hardly any evaluations available on the outcomes of these pacts and the learnings from them.

India must design and operationalise a comprehensive national policy on international labour migration, with skill-centred migration anchored as one of the fundamental pillars. Such a policy should clearly set the road map for the different processes involved in transitioning India as the global skill capital.

The way forward

The critical step in this direction is to identify and anticipate the ever-changing skills in demand in select destination countries and the emergent skill gaps across their key sectors and occupations. Organisations such as the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training are actively involved in skill forecasting for European countries using rigorous methodologies. Data and insights obtained from regional and national skill-forecasting exercises, especially for the U.S., the U.K. and Canada, that mostly cover the medium term (2-5 years), can help India respond to skill needs. This should be supplemented by big data analytics of real-time online job vacancies in destination countries for which India seeks to become the lead supplier of skills.

Once this is done, India's capacity to provide the requisite skills must be assessed. This will entail systematic mapping of the country's skill development efforts related to skill mobility and follow-up actions: introducing identified skills and competencies as a part of the curriculum in specific institutions; reorienting skill programmes of India's International Skill Centres to meet the global skill gaps; creating customised short-term skill training geared towards destination countries; and so on. The priority must be to raise the quality of skill development to international standards. This calls for the convergence of the skill qualification systems of India and the destination countries. India also needs a review of the National Skills Qualification Framework to assess its effectiveness in aligning our qualifications with those of the major destination countries.

Considering that contemporary immigration policies encourage temporisation, return migration is gaining prominence in international skilled migration flows. This is another area where India falls short: the optimum utilisation of return migrants' skills is one of the most neglected aspects of the country's migration policies. The best way to effectively reintegrate return migrants is to ensure that the skills and competencies they acquire in the destination countries are accredited by specialised skill certification institutions in those countries so that migrants can transition back effectively to the Indian labour market when they return.

Another pressing need is a skill-centred international labour migration information system, encompassing quantitative and qualitative indicators. Such a platform should regularly collate, generate, analyse, and report information and data on key indicators of skills and migration to enable evidence-based interventions. This will be pivotal in fostering skill partnerships between India and the principal destination countries, boosting skill-centred mobility, and improving migration and developmental outcomes.

India must design a comprehensive national policy on international labour migration, with skill-centred migration anchored as one of the fundamental pillars

All eyes on Kurnool

The Naidu government has charted out ambitious plans to develop the district

STATE OF PLAY

Hareesh P.
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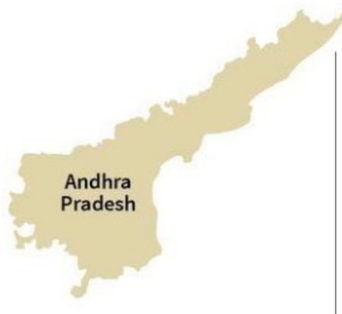
The Andhra Pradesh government has made several development plans for Kurnool, known as a backward district and the gateway to Rayalaseema. It has proposed a drone hub, enhanced industrial activity with the development of the Orvakal industrial node, greater flight connectivity, and the establishment of a High Court Bench.

Kurnool was the capital of Andhra Pradesh from October 1, 1953 to October 31, 1956. On November 1, 1956, the Telugu-speaking areas of the erstwhile Hyderabad province were merged with Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh. During the merger, the Sribagh Pact, an agreement between the political leaders of Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema regions, promised that a High Court would be set up in Kurnool. However, this did not happen.

The idea was proposed again not too long ago. As part of its decentralised development plan or the 'three capitals' proposal, the previous Jagan Mohan Reddy government said it would develop Kurnool as the judicial capital. A few judicial bodies and commissions were shifted to Kurnool and the district was notified as the headquarters of the State Human Rights Commission in 2023. However, the High Court remained in Amaravati. The 'three capitals' proposal ran into hurdles.

This year, Chandrababu Naidu returned as Chief Minister. In November 2024, the Andhra Pradesh Assembly passed a resolution for a High Court Bench in Kurnool. In-



dustries Minister T.G. Bharath announced in late November that the site survey for establishing the Bench is underway and said that the process would be completed in six months.

Apart from the High Court, Kurnool is eagerly awaiting the implementation of other promises too. Kurnool has always lagged behind in development. As it has very few industries and inadequate irrigation facilities, thousands of people have migrated from the district to other parts of the State in search of better opportunities. In 2022, when 13 new districts were carved out in Andhra Pradesh, Kurnool lost its major reservoirs to Nandyal district. Promises to develop the district have never been fulfilled or have been partially fulfilled, leaving several parts of the district underdeveloped.

The Centre recently announced that it would pump in about ₹2,700 crore for developing infrastructure in the Orvakal node of the Hyderabad-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor. The government plans to integrate several manufacturing clusters between Hyderabad and Bangaluru in the Orvakal node near Kurnool.

The plan to set up a 300-acre drone hub at Orvakal, the first-of-its-kind in the country, will also boost industrial development as it serve as a centre for training, innovation, and drone-related business. This is part of the government's ambitious plans to turn the State into a drone capital. The Andhra Pradesh government is also planning to draft a drone policy. Drones are especially useful in the healthcare and agriculture sectors, and during calamities, as the government found out during the recent floods in Vijayawada.

The government believes that attracting investors to set up units at the Orvakal node will reap dividends. Orvakal is located near the Kurnool airport, which began commercial operations from March 2021. Air connectivity to Orvakal is also likely to increase as the government is trying to persuade flight operators to run services to Vijayawada.

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) MPs recently submitted a representation to the Centre seeking a railway line that will connect Kurnool to Amaravati, which will further propel growth in the district.

Historically, Kurnool was a stronghold of the TDP. However, this changed when Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy became Chief Minister. Later, Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSR Congress Party dominated the undivided district of Kurnool in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections. In the 2024 elections, however, the National Democratic Alliance managed to flip Rayalaseema's long-standing political dynamics. Of the 14 seats in undivided Kurnool, the TDP secured 12.

Given the TDP's dominance and as Mr. Naidu has proved his capability in transforming grand visions into reality in the past, there is hope that Kurnool may finally see a brighter future. The TDP government is also at an advantage compared to the YSRCP government as the Bharatiya Janata Party is also part of the government in the State.

Indian visa denials linked to fraud, not housing crisis, in Australia

While students were blamed for the housing crisis, visa grant rates for Chinese students remain unaffected

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy
Vignesh Radhakrishnan
Amitha Reji George

Affordable homes are becoming increasingly scarce in Australia. The government attributed last year's sharp rise in immigration as a key factor that is contributing to the crisis. In response, it has implemented measures to restrict the inflow of students whose numbers skyrocketed last year, significantly outpacing the numbers of skilled migrants and other categories.

An Australian government department's analysis shows that 60% of international students live in apartments, 26% in detached houses, and the remainder in hostels or university housing. These numbers, read along with the unprecedented surge in international students in 2023, shed light on the acute housing crisis, particularly in Sydney and Melbourne, which attract most of these students.

Chart 1 illustrates the Rental Affordability Index in the greater capital areas of Sydney and Melbourne, where a higher index indicates better affordability. Rent affordability has plummeted in both regions, with the decline being much steeper in Sydney than Melbourne. This coincides with the sharp increase in student arrivals.

While the housing crisis, exacerbated by a surge in student numbers, provided a rationale for limiting student intake, a closer look reveals disparities in how these restrictions were applied. Students from certain countries, particularly India, were impacted disproportionately, while students from other countries, notably China, grew in number this year despite the restrictions.

Chart 2 depicts the visa grant rates for students from India, China, and all countries who applied for higher education and vocational education and training courses in Australia. China and India are shown separately because they form the top two shares of international students by a significant margin. The overall visa grant rate has dropped significantly from more than 90% before the pandemic to below 80% after, in line with the new tightening. The grant rate for Indian students dropped from nearly 90% to 65%. But for Chinese students, it has remained close to 95% even in recent years.

Is this disparity because Indian students are more concentrated in regions with acute housing crises, while Chinese students are not? **Chart 3** shows that Chinese students outnumber Indian students in Sydney (New South Wales), where the housing crisis is more severe, whereas Indian students outnumber Chinese students in Melbourne (Victoria), where it is comparatively better. If the housing crisis was the primary factor for increased visa denials, Chinese students should have faced more rejections given their higher concentration in Sydney. So, what explains the higher denial rates for Indian students?

The answer might lie in another problem – mounting visa fraud. The Australian government's Department of Education says there is a higher proportion of "high-risk" student visa applications from India, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Chart 4 shows the visa processing time in days for Chinese and Indian students between April and July this year and last year. The processing time is separately denoted for three types of student visa applications: straightforward (satisfies most necessities), typical, and complex (lacks many requirements). Although the processing time has increased for Chinese and Indian students, Indian student visas are processed for a much longer time, which is attributed to their classification as "high-risk". Thus the higher rejection rate for Indian students is better explained by an increase in visa fraud rather than the housing crisis.

Stricter down under

The data for the charts were sourced from the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Education, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Housing Dashboard, SGS Economics and Planning's 2024 Rental Affordability Index, and the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council's State of the Housing System 2024 report

In the charts China and India are shown separately because they are the top two sources of international students. In all the charts, data is as of October 31, 2024

Chart 1: The chart illustrates the Rental Affordability Index in the greater capital areas of Sydney and Melbourne, where a higher index indicates better affordability

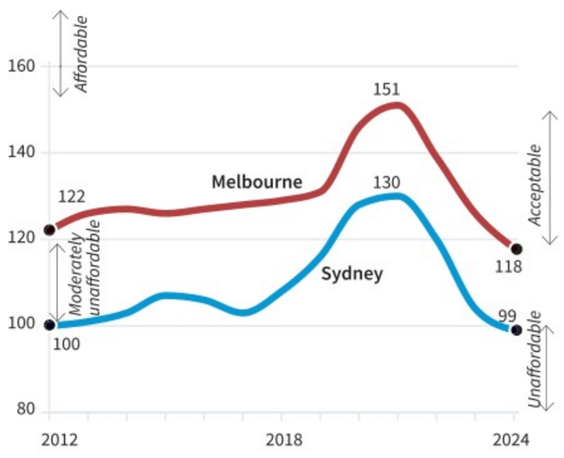


Chart 2: Visa grant rates for students from India, China, and all countries who applied for higher education and vocational education and training courses in Australia

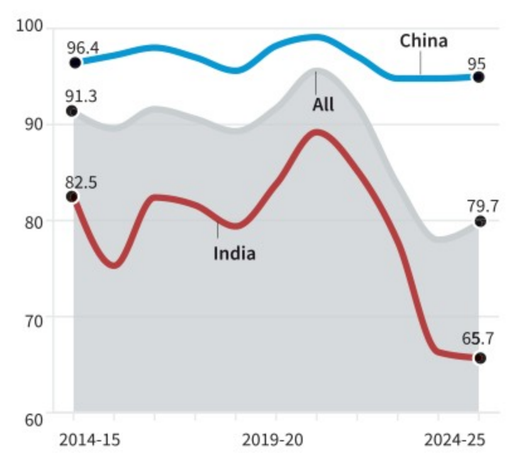


Chart 3: Number of students from India and China who began courses in New South Wales and Victoria over the years. K=1,000

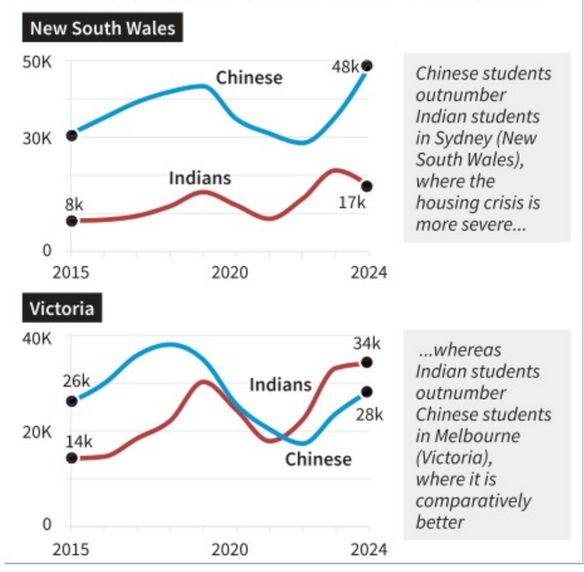
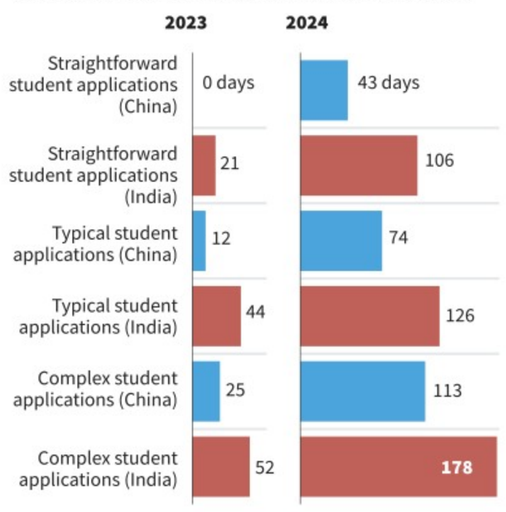


Chart 4: Visa processing time **in days** for Chinese and Indian students between April and July in 2023 and 2024



Amitha Reji George is interning with The Hindu Data Team

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 24, 1974

An old Kerala musical instrument

Madras, Dec. 23: At the meeting of the Experts Committee held to-day in connection with the 48th conference of the Music Academy, Sri Chummar Choondal presented a paper on Nanthuny, an old musical instrument of Kerala in vogue among Mannars (Vannar in Tamil) – the washerman community. It was used as a tala and sruti accompaniment for the recital of songs on Bhagavati. The instrument is 4.5 feet hollow wooden body, with two fibre strings and played with a plectrum made of horn. Although it has five frets only the middle and lower are pressed. The fibre strings produce two or three notes and the sruti provided is approximately one kattai. Nanthuny seems to be a corruption for Nan-dhvani meaning "good sound". It is in vogue chiefly in Central and North Kerala among Mannar Velaan and Perumannan communities during Bhagavati worship and other rituals. There were references to this instrument in Malayalam works of the end of 14th century. Oomanattu Sankunni, 76, gave a demonstration on the instrument.

Sri Titte Krishna Iyengar, speaking on the contribution to music of the Maharajas of Mysore, said the first Maharaja of Mysore who started the Navaratri festival for which Mysore became famous, was Raja Wadiyar (1578-1670). Chikka Devaraja Wadiyar (1673-1704) played the Kalavati Veena and composed the musical poem Gita Gopala in the style of Gita Govinda. Krishnaraja Wadiyar (1895-1940) encouraged many distinguished musicians. Sri Jayachamaraja Wadiyar was a scholar and composer who continued the patronage extended by Mysore Court.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 24, 1924

Bolshevism in China

Paris, Dec. 23: The anxiety regarding the forthcoming events in the Far East was voiced by M. Outrey, Deputy for Indo-China, in the course of the debate on colonial estimates in the chamber. M. Outrey said he apprehended one organisation of a Bolshevist Government in China. He knew that Japan had protected herself against the movement by an understanding with Mr. Changtsolin, and Japan and Korea would certainly be saved from the wave of Bolshevism. But it was also certain that the wave would spread beyond China, and soon reach Indo-China, Burma, and India.

From Page One

3 'Khalistan operatives' shot dead in U.P.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the terror module was controlled by Pakistan-based Rajeet Singh Nita, the chief of KZF, and was operated by Greece-based Jaswinder Singh Mannu, a native of Agwan village in in Gurdaspur's Kalanaur, Mr. Yadav said. "Varinder, who led the module, belonged to Agwan, and was further controlled by U.K.-based Jagjeet Singh," the police said.

A senior police officer from the Punjab Police said one of the deceased accused was earlier working as a driver, while another had criminal cases against him. "Now, we shall investigate what their plan was in Pilibhit, if they were planning to move towards another location, and who was sheltering them and helping them with logistics. It is an entire network that we need to crack down on," the officer said.

Explaining the commonality between those suspected of Khalistani activities, another officer said, "They are usually men involved in criminal activities, from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, who are radicalised and involved in influencing youth. We are investigating these trends, and if the accused were lured in a similar pattern."

Bangladesh seeks Hasina's extradition

Ms. Hasina left Dhaka on August 5 and ever since has been living in exile in India. Soon after her departure, dozens of cases were filed against her and members of the erstwhile Awami League government by students and activists who faced the brunt of the police crackdown during the last weeks of her rule.

Ms. Hasina is also facing cases of kidnapping and deaths in encounter during her 16-year-long rule. She is also facing inquiries over the Pilkhana killings case of 2009 and the killings in a rally of Hefazat-e-Islam. Several members of her Ministries and several other members of the armed forces who served under her are facing inquiries.

Bangladesh issued an arrest warrant against Ms. Hasina in October but the legal process is yet to unfold.

In 2015, India had extradited convicted killer Nur Hossain of the infamous Narayanganj seven murders case. He was given a death sentence in 2022 by a Dhaka court. That apart, the extradition of Prashanta Kumar Haldar, accused of committing multiple financial frauds in Bangladesh, is pending. Mr. Haldar remains wanted by the authorities in Bangladesh.

Benegal, giant of Indian cinema, bids farewell

Mourning the *Ankur* director's death, Naseeruddin Shah shared over a text message: "It is impossible to describe in a few words what Shyam meant to me. I wonder what I would have become if he hadn't had faith in me when no one else did. He and Nira (Benegal's wife) were a huge support in my difficult days. He did whatever he could with his life-right to the end. Not many people can claim to have done that."

Benegal, celebrated for poignant and hard-hitting films like *Ankur*, *Nishant*, *Mandi*, *Manthan* and *Zubeidaa*, examined the many fault lines of Indian society, tackling issues of feudalism, caste, and women's emancipation while ceaselessly experimenting with the cinematic form. His vast filmography boasts several masterpieces that altered the course of Indian cinema.

Known for his unflagging energy and intellect, Benegal worked across a range of media, using photography, film, theatre and long-form television to chronicle the journey of post-Independence India. He was born in Hyderabad in 1934; his paternal grandmother hailed from Indian director Guru Dutt's family; they were thus second cousins. After an early career in advertising, Benegal taught at the Film and Television Institute of India and made documentaries, directing his first feature, *Ankur*, in 1974.

Even as the nation and its cinema transformed, Benegal continued to work, carving out a niche in mainstream Bollywood. The recipient of 10 national awards, he was conferred the Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan, India's fourth and third-highest civilian awards.

Kashmir artisans give wings to the dodo

Most papier mache artisans do not know much about how dodos were introduced in Kashmir's art scene. The bird is a very recent addition to the craft, which has been practised in Kashmir for over 600 years now.

"There were tourists from Mauritius who visited Kashmir and introduced the bird around two decades ago. There is no written record though of who exactly got it here," Mr. Jan said.

Thanks to those unknown tourists, the dodos have got wings and the demand for them is only growing with each passing day. "Papier mache artisans of Kashmir are keeping the memory of dodos alive," Mahmood Shah, who served as Director Handicrafts and Handloom in Kashmir till recently, told *The Hindu*.

Justice V. Ramasubramanian

Former SC judge named human rights panel chief

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The President of India on Monday appointed former Supreme Court judge, Justice V. Ramasubramanian (retd.), as Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission. The post of NHRC chief was lying vacant since June this year.

President Droupadi Murmu also appointed child rights advocate Priyank Kanoongo and retired Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi as NHRC members. A committee led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had met on December 18 to select the NHRC chief. Opposition leaders in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi respectively, also attended the meeting.

Jaishankar's six-day U.S. visit will kick off today

The External Affairs Minister will hold talks with Antony Blinken, others in what may be the last engagement with Biden administration; he will also meet members of Trump transition team

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Weeks ahead of the swearing-in of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is travelling to the United States to meet with officials of the outgoing Biden administration, as well as the Trump administration team. Mr. Jaishankar, who will be in the U.S. from December 24-29, will join Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, who is already in Washington for Foreign Office Consultations.

In a statement about Mr. Jaishankar's previously unannounced visit on Monday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) provided no specific details on which U.S. officials he would meet during the week.

"Mr. Jaishankar will be meeting counterparts to discuss key bilateral, regional and global issues," the MEA's statement said, adding that, during the visit, the External Affairs Minister would chair a conference of the Consul Generals of India in the United States.

Diplomatic dialogue: S. Jaishankar with Antony Blinken at the G-7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in November. PTI

Sources confirmed to *The Hindu* that the Biden administration is also keen on scheduling one last meeting of the National Security Advisor (NSA)-level Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) before demitting office, and are working on a possible visit by American NSA Jake Sullivan to Delhi in early January.

The two sides have also discussed cooperation in biotechnology, space cooperation, quantum technologies, Artificial Intelligence, and semiconductors, most recently when Mr. Sullivan travelled to Delhi to meet with the government just after elections in June this year.

Mr. Jaishankar and Mr. Misri are also expected to engage with members of the Trump transition team, as well as some of the top nominees for the State Department and Department of Defence about high-level meetings soon after the Trump inauguration on January 20, as well as an early date for Mr. Trump to travel to India for the Quad Summit to be hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi next year.

The visit by Mr. Jaishankar mirrors a similar visit he undertook in November 2016 as the then Foreign Secretary, to meet with the Trump transition team. Mr. Modi had travelled to Washington within a few months of Mr. Trump's first tenure in 2017, and officials didn't rule out another visit by him to the U.S. in 2025 itself.

However, there was no clarity on whether Mr. Trump would invite Mr. Modi to his inaugural ceremony.

This is also Mr. Jaishankar's first visit to the U.S. since the announcement of the Department of Justice, and Securities and Exchange Commission indictments on Gautam Adani and key Adani Group officials. While both governments have brushed off the impact of the case, as well as the indictments against an Indian government official in the alleged Pannun assassination case, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had alleged the U.S. State Department was orchestrating "attacks" against Mr. Adani and others to target Mr. Modi. The U.S. Embassy had said it was "disappointed" by the BJP's statement.

Kharge urges Modi govt. to fulfil promises to farmers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday urged the Modi government to not do further "injustice" to farmers by pursuing "anti-farmer policies".

On the occasion of former Prime Minister Charan Singh's birth anniversary, which is celebrated as Kisan Divas, Mr. Kharge hailed farmers as the people who make India.

"It is hoped that the Modi government will not do further injustice to our farmers through its stubbornness and anti-farmer policies and will implement its old promises," he said in a post on X.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, also greeted farmers on Kisan Diwas in a post on X.

In a separate message, the Congress also targeted the government on high inflation.

"The bullet train announced by the Modi government has not arrived, but inflation, which is running faster than bullet train, has broken the back of the common man," the party's communications chief Jairam Ramesh said.

At Christmas celebrations, PM condemns attempts to incite violence in society

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday condemned the attempts to incite violence in society, stating that it is disheartening when there are attempts to spread disharmony and violence which cause disruption in society.

"Just a few days ago, the world saw what happened at the Christmas market in Germany. The teaching of Jesus Christ celebrates love, harmony, and brotherhood," Mr. Modi said while addressing a Christmas celebration hosted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India in New Delhi. India must come together to fight such challenges, he said.

This is the first time that the Prime Minister has attended such a programme at the headquarters of the Catholic Church in India.

In his address, he highlighted the need to work in a united manner for national interest.

Seeking blessings: Narendra Modi attends Christmas celebrations hosted by the CBCI in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

Mr. Modi highlighted the evacuation of Indians stranded in war-torn nations, saying that no matter where they are or what crisis they face, today's India sees it as its duty to bring its citizens to safety.

"We brought back nurses who got stuck in the Gulf countries. It was a very satisfactory moment for me when we safely brought Father Alexis Prem Kumar from war-torn Afghanistan. All these missions are not mere diplomatic ones but an emotional commitment to bring back family members," he said.

Mr. Modi also expressed pride on Father George Koovakad's elevation as a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. "It is a moment of pride that His Holiness Pope Francis has made His Eminence George Koovakad a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church," the Prime Minister said, adding that he has invited Pope Francis to visit India.

Rahul meets kin of Dalit man who died in judicial custody in Maharashtra

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Monday met the family of Somnath Suryavanshi, who died in judicial custody after being arrested in connection with a protest triggered by the alleged desecration of a replica of the Constitution in Maharashtra's Parbhani on December 10.

Mr. Gandhi said Suryavanshi was a "defender of the Constitution" and was "murdered because he was a Dalit". The Congress leader, who spent 25 minutes with Suryavanshi's family, said strict punishment should be meted out to those responsible for the man's death.

He wrote on X, "The murder of Somnath Suryavanshi is government sponsored. People who believed in Manusmriti have taken their lives." Mr. Gandhi hit out at Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and said, "The family showed me the post-mortem report, videos and photographs. This is cent percent a custodial death. The police officials have killed him. The Chief Minister has lied in the Legislative Assembly regarding the case to give a message to the police."

Offering support: Rahul Gandhi with the family of Somnath Suryavanshi on Monday in Parbhani, Maharashtra. PTI

In Pune, Mr. Fadnavis hit back at the Opposition's allegations and said Mr. Gandhi had gone to Parbhani for "political reasons". "Once the judicial inquiry is over, the truth will come out. I assure the people that nothing will be hidden. If the investigation reveals that the death happened due to assault in police custody or any other reason, no one will be spared."

After meeting Suryavanshi's family, Mr. Gandhi met the family of activist Vijay Wakode. Wakode, a prominent activist of the Ambedkarite movement, died of heart attack while trying to control the violence in Parbhani.

Chargesheet against youth for 'passing' data to Pak. handlers

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday filed a chargesheet against a Srinagar resident for allegedly passing critical data about Pandit migrant employees to the handlers based in Pakistan for issuing online threats.

The chargesheet was filed before the 3rd Additional Sessions Judge, Jammu. According to the J&K Police's special cell, State Investigation Agency (SIA), it apprehended Farhaan Muzaffar Mattoo. "The probe revealed that Mattoo acted as a conduit, using encrypted communication platforms to pass critical data about migrant employees to handlers based in Pakistan, who then issued threats through the 'Kashmir Fight' platform," the police said.

The SIA launched an investigation in February after threatening posts were published on social media by the terror outfits.

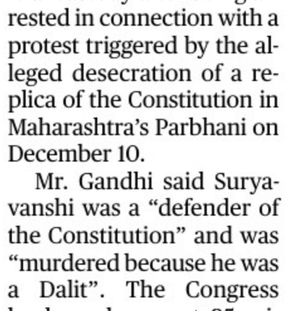
The chargesheet also named Sheikh Sajjad Ahmad alias Sajjad Gul, a Srinagar resident, "now operating from Pakistan", as the mastermind. "Sajjad is accused of coordinating the campaign to intimidate migrant employees and disrupt communal harmony," the police said.

Remain in touch with current affairs, experts tell Civil Service aspirants

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Good communication skills, sound knowledge of the chosen subjects, confidence, honesty, and listening, among others are some of the key traits the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Board looks for in candidates while selecting future bureaucrats for the country, according to experts in the webinar held on Sunday.

The panellists were speaking at the "UPSC Interview – Tips from Experts" webinar organised under the Career Counselling Series of *The Hindu Education Plus* in collaboration with Fortune IAS Academy. "If you have already cleared the CSE (Civil Services Examination) Main exam, it means you have a sound knowledge of your core and optional subjects; the PT (Personality Test) is not a cross examination or viva-voce but an intellectual and healthy discussion about the country, governance, policies and development between the Board members and the candidate," D.P. Agrawal, former Chairperson, UPSC, said.



Addressing the audience, largely comprising of aspirants who have cleared the 2024-25 Mains exam, and are preparing for interviews in January 2025, the three speakers – Mr. Agarwal, Kiran P.B., IPS, and P.K. Sidharth Ramkumar, IAS Officer Trainee – echoed and reiterated that the UPSC Personality Test is not to be feared.

All the three speakers exhorted candidates to read newspapers and remain in touch with current affairs, and acknowledged that all those who qualified in the CSE were invariably readers of *The Hindu*.

Mr. Kiran and Mr. Sidharth shared their experiences preparing for the CSE, addressing myths and doubts.

They emphasised the importance of seeking mentorship to navigate the interview process effectively, including dress code and body language.

Mr. Sidharth said the interview accounts for 15% of the total marks, and that one can sail through the interview with an average score as well, if one did well in the Mains exam.

"Ultimately, you should deliver your best and be satisfied with your performance," Mr. Kiran said.

‘Centre committed to protecting farmers and consumers’

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister says export curbs have not adversely impacted farmers because of higher domestic prices and the procurement of crops at MSP, which has been increased year after year by the government; he says the prices of onion and tomato have come down in the recent weeks; potato prices have been at elevated levels this year due to slightly lower production

INTERVIEW

Pralhad Joshi

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi says the government’s efforts are to create a balance between the interests of both consumers and producers. On the ban on export of certain agricultural commodities, he says it will not be advisable for India to gamble on international trade when it comes to food security. Excerpts:

The consumer-producer balance has been a long-debated topic. Recently Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar opined that enhancing MSP will result in overall improvement of the society, benefiting consumers too. How do you respond to this?

There is no fundamental conflict between the interest of farmers and consumers, and the government is committed to protecting both farmers and consumers. The MSP has been increased year after year by the government.

For example, if we look at the rate of increase in MSP during last 10 years: Gram/Chana from ₹3,100 per quintal in 2013-14 to ₹5,650 per quintal in 2024-25 (82%); Tur from ₹4,300 per quintal in 2013-14 to ₹7,550 per quintal in 2024-25 (76%); Masur from ₹2,950 per quintal in 2013-14 to ₹6,700 per quintal in 2024-25 (127%). The interest of consumers is served when there is abundant availability of food commodities produced by the farmers.

Increasing prices of tomato, potato, and onions have remained a worry for consumers. How do you assess the steps taken to curb inflation in the last six months?

The onion buffer has played an important role in making onions available during lean months of September to November. Retail sale at ₹35 per kilogram in major consumption centres has provided the consumers at a highly affordable price. Bulk transportation of onions by rail wagons this year has been a game changer. Over 11,000 MT of onions have been transported by 14 trains to five cities – Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Guwahati, and Lucknow.

The prices of onion and tomato have come down in recent weeks. Kharif onion sowing and production are reported to be normal. In case of tomato, prolonged monsoon rain has led to crop damage and high perishability, leading to high prices during October.

The situation has now normalised with good weather condition. Potato prices have been at elevated levels this year due to slightly lower production. Now we are entering the harvest season for potato, which will continue till March 2025. Sowing progress has so far been normal.

Export curbs are another issue. While one section favours export curbs to ensure domestic availability and reasonable domestic prices, another argument is that Indian farmers and traders should get the benefit of global trade disruptions due to Ukraine situation. How do you see this?

For a large country like India, it will not be advisable to gamble on international trade when it comes to food security. Therefore, domestic requirement has to be prioritised over trade gains.

Restrictions imposed on exports in certain agricultural crops, in recent past, have not adversely impacted Indian farmers in real sense because of higher domestic prices and the procurement of these crops at the MSP.

The Centre is issuing a series of Quality Control Orders (QCOs) in several goods and services. How do you assess these QCOs impact on exports?

This has been beneficial in both imports and exports. We did not have a standard for many products. We brought standardisation for 769 products. QCOs are issued by various Ministries/Departments (Regulators) of the Union government under the provisions of the BIS Act, 2016. BIS acts as the certification and enforcement authority for implementing these QCOs.

To minimise disruptions, sufficient time is provided by the regulators to manufacturers for smooth implementation of QCOs. If concerns arise regarding the impact of QCOs on production of certain products, such matters are dealt with by the respective regulators whenever industry raises their concerns and makes representations before the regulators concerned.

The regulators are conducting stakeholder consultations in coordination with the BIS to address these issues and may take appropriate measures, including extensions or modifications to the implementation timeline, to prevent potential supply gaps and ensure a balanced approach. It may be mentioned here that timelines have been extended in most of the QCOs based on request from stakeholders.

House committee flags excess spending by four Ministries

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

K.C. Venugopal

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), headed by senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, in a report tabled during the recently concluded Winter session of Parliament, revealed that the Ministries of Finance, Defence, Railways, and Chemical & Fertilizers spent ₹1,291.14 crore in excess of the 2021-22 Budget sanctioned by Parliament.

In the report titled “Excesses over voted grants and charged appropriations (2021-22)”, the PAC took the government to task, saying that “overspending should not continue in the age of e-governance and e-payment systems, where Ministries have access to real-time tools to monitor expenditure”.

‘Furnish explanations’

The committee found that for the financial year 2021-22, a total of ₹1,291.14 crore was incurred by the Ministry of Finance (₹742.56 crore), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (₹493.38 crore), Ministry of Railways (₹55.16 crore), and the Ministry of Defence (₹3.17 crore).

When the allocated money for a year’s expenditure is not enough, the government can request an excess grant. This is provided for in Article 115 of the Constitution. If expenditures exceed the approved amounts for voted grants or charged appropriations in a financial year, this excess is disclosed in the accounts and categorised into revenue and capital sections. To facilitate regularisation, Ministries have to furnish explanations to the PAC.

‘Strict scrutiny’

The panel stressed the need for strict scrutiny of Budget proposals, continuous monitoring of pace of expenditure, and strict adherence to financial rules.

“The consistently weak internal expenditure control mechanism against voted grants and charged appropriations, lack of realistic Budget estimation at revised estimate and Budget Estimate stage, and the failure to seek supplementary demands are the primary reasons for excess expenditure,” the panel said.

Congress has always insulted Ambedkar, it must apologise: BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ravi Shankar Prasad

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday accused the Congress of “always insulting” Dr. B.R. Ambedkar during his lifetime, and said the party was now indulging in “a drama of remembering his legacy”.

Former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said this while reacting to the Congress’s week-long nationwide campaign against Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s speech in Parliament during the Winter Session, which, the Congress maintains, had “insulting” references to Dr. Ambedkar.

Mr. Prasad accused the Congress of using a small portion of Mr. Shah’s speech in the Rajya Sabha out of context in a bid to “establish its political identity”.

“The Congress which always insulted B.R. Ambedkar is holding press conferences across the country... Stop this drama. Stop this hypocrisy,” he said at a press conference at the BJP’s headquarters in New Delhi.

“The Congress must tender an unconditional apology for all the insults and humiliations done to B.R. Ambedkar during his lifetime and to his legacy after his death,” he said.

Mr. Prasad said the people of the country were very mature and the Congress’s “efforts will not succeed”.

“The Congress party had forced Ambedkar to resign during elections, and they made sure he couldn’t build a memorial. Now, Congress is holding a press conference in Ambedkar’s name. When Ambedkar was resigning, he wasn’t even allowed to speak,” he said.

“The BJP demands that Congress apologise for the mistreatment of Ambedkar, which is also documented in papers. [Narayan Sadoba] Kajrolkar [who defeated Ambedkar in the 1952 Lok Sabha polls] was honoured with an award, and this was done by Congress. Dr. Ambedkar was never in favour of partition. There is a significant difference in the thinking of the BJP and the Congress. We believe in respecting even our staunchest opponents,” Mr. Prasad said.

Left parties call for Shah’s resignation, to hold demonstration on December 30

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The leaders of five Left parties have announced a day-long protest on December 30 to press for the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah over his “disrespectful and derogatory” comments on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

The leaders of the Communist Party of India, CPI (Marxist), CPI (Marxist-Leninist), Revolutionary Socialist Party, and the All India Forward Bloc met on Sunday in Delhi. The meeting was the first of many planned, as the parties decided to work closely and hold joint action on issues.

In a statement issued on Monday, the parties noted that Mr. Shah’s “disrespectful and derogatory” remarks on Dr. Ambedkar in the Rajya Sabha led to widespread anger and protests across the country.

“However, neither Amit Shah nor Prime Minister Narendra Modi are willing to own up responsibility and take remedial action,” the statement said.

The parties also unequivocally opposed the proposal of simultaneous elections, for which two Bills including a Constitutional amendment Bill, were introduced in Parliament. “The proposed amendments to the Constitution are a direct assault on the federal structure and the rights of State legislatures. It is a recipe for centralisation and truncating the will of the people by arbitrary reduction of the five-year term of legislatures,” the Left parties said.

They also demanded the withdrawal of the amendment to the Conduct of Election Rules whereby the right of public inspection of electronic documents such as CCTV cameras and video footage was annulled.

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e-Tenders are invited for supply of **“(1)7,200 Kgs Asafoetida Powder, (2) 2,00,000 Kgs of Jaggery Aragonda Variety First Quality, through e-tenders”** to the Marketing Department, T.T. Devasthanams. For Tender notice and tender details log on to the web site **http://www.tirumala.org** and **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in.**

For further details contact phone numbers: **0877-2264079, 2264555.**

TTD-40021(31)/1/2024-PRO SEC (Adv.No.274) Date:23-12-2024 **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala)
Corporate Identification Number: U40109PB010SGC033813) | Website: www.pspcl.in, (Contact No. 9646117606)

Tender Enquiry No.: 162/MM-I/MAMC-268/O&M/GHTP/2024

Dy. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Mtc. Circle-I/GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-tender for renewals & replacement of existing centralized Air Conditioning system of UCB control rooms of 2x250 MW unit-3 & 4 Stage-II, GHTP, Lehra-Mohabbat. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **23-12-2024 from 16:00 PM** onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

GHTP - 101/24 76155/12/3744/2023/40146

कार्यालय महात्मा ज्योतिबा फूले कृषि उपज मण्डी समिति, विशिष्ट श्रेणी, भीलवाड़ा (राज.)

क्रमांक :- कृ.उ.म.स./सी.आई.सी./पी. एण्ड एम./2024-25/1626-42 दिनांक :- 19/12/2024

ई-निविदा सूचना : 05/2024-25

कृषि उपज मण्डी समिति, भीलवाड़ा में पी.एम.एफ.एम.ई. योजना में Intends to establish Common Incubation Centre (CIC) with common food processing facilities for three Processing lines (1. Maize grift processing line, 2. Amla Murabba processing line. Amla inspection, washing, grading Utilities & Auxiliary Equipment and juice section). व Food testing laboratory के लियें आवश्यक उपकरणों की स्थापना के बाद इसे व्यावसायिक आधार पर चलाने के लिये तीसरे पक्ष / निजी संचालन और प्रबंधक (O&M) हेतु 5 वर्ष के लिये ऐसे इच्छुक योग्य एजेन्सीयों से ई-निविदा ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेबसाईट **www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** के माध्यम से दिनांक 19.12.2024 से 09.11.2025 तक आमंत्रित की गई है। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण **www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** पर NIB Code-DAM2425A0538 (UBN No-DAM2425SL0B01134) एवं विभागीय वेबसाईट agriculture.rajasthan.gov.in/mandi पर भी देखा जा सकता है।

राज.संवाद/सी/24/9439 प्रशासक सचिव

MAHATRANSCO Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.

E-TENDER NOTICE

MSETCL invites online bids (E-Tender) for following

S.N.	Tender No. & Description
1	RFx. No. 7000034690; Work of Supply , Civil and ETC (excluding supply of ICT) for scheme of additional 501MVA 400/220/33KV ICT-III and 1X167MVA 400/220/33KV Spare ICT along with the provision of RRS at 400/220KV Koradi-II S/s under 400KV S/S (O&M) Division Koradi-II under Nagpur Zone. EMD Rs. 3884232/- & Tender Fees: Rs. 25000/- (GST extra)

Tenders Available at : https://srmetender.mahatransco.in; Due date for online submission upto: 13.01.2025, 17:00 Hrs; Tender Opening 13.01.2025, 18:00 Hrs if possible.

-sd-
Chief Engineer EHV PC O&M Zone Nagpur.

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED
Corporate Identity Number (CIN) –U40109RJ2000SGC016483
OFFICE OF THE IN-CHARGE (RE-DSM CELL) Regd. Office : New Power House, Jodhpur- 342003
E-Mail : xenredsmjdvvnl@gmail.com, sedsmju@gmail.com, Website : www.jdvvnl.com

E-PROCUREMENT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expression of Interest (EOI) are invited for design, survey, supply, installation, testing, commissioning, operation & maintenance for 25 years from COD of grid connected solar power plants through RESCO mode, its associated 11 kV line to connect the plant with various 33/11 kV sub-stations and remote monitoring system (RMS) of solar power plants under PM-KUSUM Scheme - Component A in various Circles of Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited against EOI-TN-DSM-83 (UBN No. JVV2425WSOB00703)). All the details regarding tender is available at web site **www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** and **www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** vide EOI No. JDVVNL/IN-CHARGE (RE-DSM)/EOI-TN-DSM-83.

In future any other notices/information regarding corrigendum/extension, if any, shall be published only at web sites: **www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl, http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**

Raj.Samwad/C/24/9401 IN-CHARGE (RE-DSM CELL)

बिजली संबंधी शिकायतों के लिए टोल फ्री नम्बर 1800 180 6045

RSS chief’s statement aimed at misleading country: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> If the RSS chief is really honest, Bhagwat should publicly declare that the Sangh will never support leaders who endanger social harmony
>
> **JAIRAM RAMESH**

Alleging that the recent statement of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat is aimed at misleading the country, the Congress on Monday asked why doesn’t the RSS publicly declare that it wouldn’t support any leader who does the politics of temple-mosque if Mr. Bhagwat was “honest” about his intentions.

Recently, Mr. Bhagwat had expressed concern over the resurgence of new disputes regarding temple-mosque and had said that some individuals, after the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, seem to believe they can become “leaders of Hindus” by raking up such issues.

Responding to the RSS chief’s statement, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a post on X, said it reflected the difference between “their words and actions”.

“If the RSS chief is really honest about his statement, he should publicly declare that in future, the Sangh will never support such leaders who endanger social harmony,” Mr. Ramesh said, adding, “But they will not say this because the temple-mosque construction is happening at the behest of the RSS”.

He said in many cases, those “who incite such divisive issues have connections with the RSS”.

“They are associated with Bajrang Dal, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) or BJP, and the RSS helps them completely from getting a lawyer to filing a case. It is clear that Mr. Bhagwat’s statement is only to mislead the society. He thinks that by saying such things, the sins of RSS will be washed away, and his image will improve. But his reality is before the country,” Mr. Ramesh said.

‘CISF is not probing scuffle in Parliament’

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is not carrying out any investigation into the scuffle that took place among MPs on Parliament premises during the Winter Session, a senior official said on Monday.

“There is no order to CISF for carrying out an enquiry into the incident,” Shrikant Kishore, Deputy Inspector-General (Operations), CISF, said at a press conference. He added that there was no lapse on the part of the CISF on the day of the event, and no weapon was allowed to be carried inside.

भारत सरकार
अंतरिक्ष विभाग
इसरो नोदन कॉम्प्लेक्स
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह
महेंद्रगिरि पी ओ-627 133
दूरभाष : 04637–28-1672 | 1582 | 3582
फैक्स : 04637 – 281681

इसरो isro

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
ISRO PROPULSION COMPLEX
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
MAHENDRAGIRI PO - 627 133
Telephone: 04637 – 28-1672 | 1582 | 3582
Fax: 04637 – 281681.

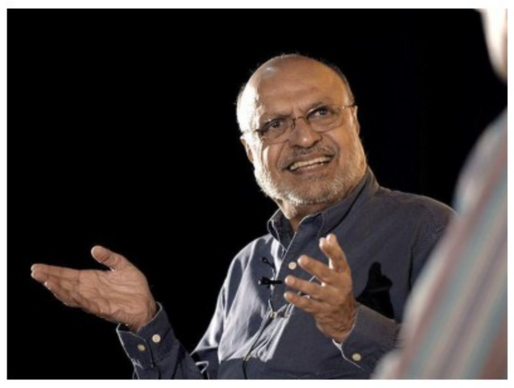
ई-निविदा सूचना / E-TENDER NOTICE दिनांक/Dated : 20-12-2024

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु **ई-निविदा** द्वारा मद-दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।
On Behalf of the President of India, item-rate tenders are invited through **e-tendering** for the following work:

क्र. सं. / Sl. No.	कार्य का नाम / Name of Work	प्राक्कलित लागत / Estimated Cost ₹(लाखों में) (in Lakhs)	कार्य पूरा होने की अवधि / Period of completion	ईएमडी / EMD(₹)
1	एनआईटी सं:आईपीआरसी/ सीएमजी/ टीडी/ ई-141/ एमडब्ल्यू-05/2024-25	NIT no:IPRC/CMG/TD/e-141/MW-05/2024-25		
	कन्याकुमारी में अंतरिक्ष विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी पार्क (एसएसटीपी) के लिए संग्रहालय भवन का निर्माण (सिविल एवं पीएच कार्य)। / **Construction of Museum Building for Space Science and Technology Park [SSTP] at Kanyakumari.[Civil & PH works]**	1795.77	20 (बीस महीने / Twenty months)	27,96,000

ऑनलाइन निवेदन करने की तिथि: **Dates for Online Request : From 24-12-2024[10:00 hours/ बजे] से To: 07-01-2025[23:30 hours/ बजे] तक।**
बोली स्पष्टीकरण / **Bid clarifications From : 24-12-2024 [10:10 hours/ बजे] से To: 08-01-2025[23:59 hours/ बजे] तक।**
नियत समय व प्रस्तुतीकरण की तिथि: Due Date & Time of Submission : **16-01-2025 [14:00 hours/बजे] तक।**
अधिक जानकारी के लिए देखें : For further details visit: **www.isro.gov.in/tenders (या/or) www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.**
नोट : उपर्युक्त कार्य (कार्यों) के लिए भविष्य में सभी पत्राचार (शुद्धिपत्र) केवल उपर्युक्त वेबसाइट पर ही प्रकाशित किए जाएंगे।
Note : All future correspondence (Corrigenda) for the above work(s) shall be published only on the websites mentioned above.

समूह निदेशक, सीएमजी, आईपीआरसी / GROUP DIRECTOR, CMG, IPRC



Showing the way: Shyam Benegal's works will continue to be admired, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

End of a glorious chapter: President

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, filmmakers Shekhar Kapur and Hansal Mehta, and actors Manoj Bajpayee, Akshay Kumar, and Kajol paid rich tributes to Shyam Benegal, remembering the director as someone who ushered in a "new kind of cinema".

President Murmu said the passing of Benegal marks the end of a glorious chapter of Indian cinema and television. "He started a new kind of cinema and crafted several classics. A veritable institution, he groomed many actors and artists. His extraordinary contribution was recognised in the form of numerous awards including Dadasaheb Phalke Award and Padma Bhushan. My condolences to the members of his family and his countless admirers," she wrote in a post on X.

Mr. Modi said he was "deeply saddened' by the death of Benegal. "His works will continue to be admired by people from different walks of life. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti," he said.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi called Benegal "a visionary filmmaker" who brought India's stories to life with depth and sensitivity.

Filmmaker who gave a voice to the voiceless, held dear the idea of India

Shyam Benegal experimented with form and technique, broke every boundary to document the changing contours of Indian society and kept evolving with times; be it farmers or sex workers, his protagonists questioned the social order with searing intensity without resorting to hyperbole

Anuj Kumar
NEW DELHI

A peerless filmmaker who gave voice to the voiceless and documented the idea of India through his rich oeuvre, Shyam Benegal passed away on Monday in a Mumbai hospital at 90.

One of the foremost oarsmen of the Indian New Wave, reality never escaped from Benegal's focus.

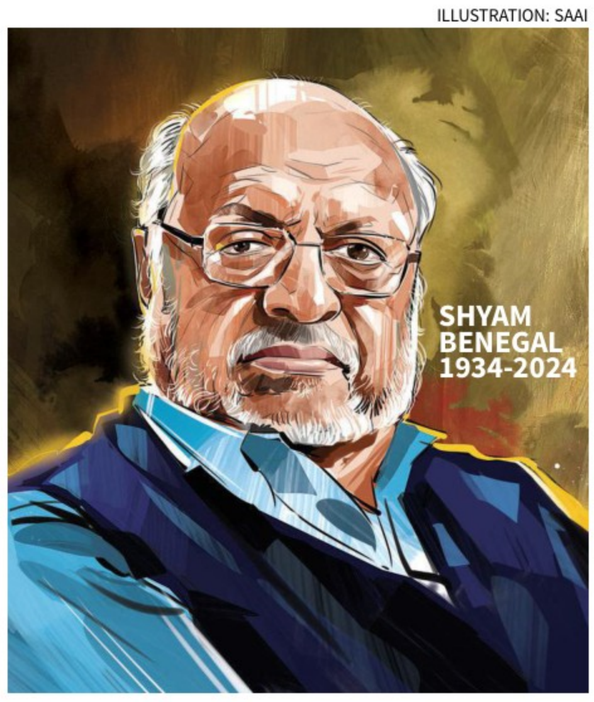
In 1970s, when Bollywood was looking for poetic justice through the Angry Young Man, Benegal captured the silent resistance of the marginalised in feudal India with *Ankur* (1974), *Nishant* (1975), and *Manthan* (1976).

Be it farmers or sex workers, his protagonists questioned the prevailing social order with searing intensity without resorting to hyperbole for the Dada Saheb Phalke Award winner saw cinema as a medium that can reflect the very act of living. Starting as an ad filmmaker, Benegal consistently experimented with form and technique and kept evolving with times. His range of subjects remain unrivalled as Benegal broke every boundary to document the changing contours of Indian society.

Budgets were never a constraint for his vision. Born to a photographer father in Hyderabad, Benegal discovered very early that there is nothing in the human experience that can't be depicted through the medium.

He grew up watching the works of Guru Dutt, his second cousin, but the real inspiration came from Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*. Like Ray, his films always found a theatrical release. He believed that the audience always stood for meaningful cinema.

ILLUSTRATION: SAAI



From idealism to satire

Music was integral to his cinema but not as a decorative device. The strains in *Bhumika*, *Mandi*, and *Sardari Begum* scythe through the atavistic mores of society and leave a mark on the conscience.

If his early works were rooted in idealism, satire gradually found its way in films like *Welcome to Sajjanpur* and *Well Done Abba*.

He adapted Mahabharat as *Kalyug* in a corporate family. The film speaks to us even today. Later, he recreated Dharamvir Bharti's novel into the lyrical *Suraj Ka Satwan Ghoda*.

He brought crowd funding to Indian cinema much before it became a fad and made classics like *Manthan*, *Antarnaad*, and *Susman*.

His touching trilogy woven around Muslim women, *Sardari Begum*, *Mammo*, and *Zubeidaa* brought him back to the top billing in the 1990s.

Strong team of creatives

He forged a strong team of creatives with Govind Nihalani, Shama Zaidi, and Vanraj Bhatia to realise vision and introduced us to powerhouse talent like Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah, Rajit Kapoor, Salim Ghouse, and Rajeshwari Sachdev. All through, he challenged actors to go beyond their comfort zone. Be it Smita Patil and Amol Palekar in *Bhumika* or Karisma Kapoor in *Zubeidaa*, the actors found a new life in Benegal's hands.

Someone who didn't wear his ideology on his sleeve, in *The Making of Mahatma*, he introduced us to Gandhi's psyche before he became the Mahatma and with equal passion documented the life of Subhas Chandra Bose in *The Forgotten Hero*. His objective gaze came through in *Bharat Ek Khoj*, an adaptation of Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India* where he captured the spirit of India. It was his most comprehensive work that has withstood the test of time. Not to forget *Samvidhan* where he introduced the Constitution to young Indians.

Behind that hard exterior, Benegal carried a gentle soul who would go the extra mile to make his actors feel comfortable. Humble to the core, he would always be ready to take criticism in his stride.

Age didn't diminish his passion. In 2023, he came up with an engaging biopic of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Alive to the times, as the head of the committee formed to suggest changes in the working of Central Board of Film Certification, he suggested far-reaching changes.

A strong advocate of the pluralist identity of India, when Aamir Khan spoke about growing intolerance in Indian society, Benegal had said, "You can and you should and you must raise your voice against intolerance. We are constitutionally bound to protect our minorities."

Centre scraps 'no-detention' policy for Classes 5, 8; lays stress on remedial measures

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre has done away with the "no-detention" policy for Classes 5 and 8, paving the way for schools to hold back students who are unable to clear year-end examinations.

The Ministry of Education has published a gazette notification dated December 16, titled "Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Rules, 2024", which states that if a child fails to fulfil promotion criteria in Classes 5 or 8 in the regular examination, they can be held back. In the Rules, the Ministry also emphasised the need for remedial measures for such students to close learning gaps.

Students who do not fulfil the promotion criteria can sit for a re-examination in two months

While the Right to Education Act, 2009 had been amended to scrap the no-detention policy as early as 2019, the Rules have been notified only now. "Since the National Education Policy (NEP) was announced in 2020, we waited for the National Curriculum Framework document which was published in 2023, before coming out with the Rules," a senior Ministry official said.

After all other options are exhausted, if there is a need to detain the student, they shall be detained. "At the same time, no student should be expelled from school until Class 8," said Union School Education Secretary Sanjay Kumar.

The Rules further state that if a child fails to fulfil the promotion criteria, as notified from time to time, they shall be given additional instruction and opportunity for re-examination within a period of two months, from the date of declaration of results. If the child fails to clear the re-exam, they should be held back.

When the child is held back, the class teacher shall guide the child as well as the parents, if necessary, and provide specialised inputs after identifying the learning gaps at various stages of assessment. Mr. Kumar further said, "We also want the learning outcomes of the students to be better."

Amit Shah warns of disruptive powers of fake news in society

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that "divisive forces are still active in the country today" emphasising that disinformation, misinformation, 'malinformation', and fake news had the power to disrupt the social fabric of the society with the help of new technology.

Mr. Shah spoke on the need to develop an intelligence coordination strategy with friendly nations to detect anti-India organisations and networks, and this strategy "must include offensive measures as well". He mentioned that merely sharing information was not enough and it should be ensured that vital intelligence was received from those nations as well.

He also highlighted the need to take prompt and decisive action against hoax calls and fake emails, as enemies of the country were successfully creating an atmosphere of fear and terror among the public through these means. The Home Minister stressed that to reduce the spread of propaganda to zero, the country should have "strategy, technology, and readiness in place". He said that a country where social unity did not exist could not progress in any meaningful way. Mr. Shah delivered the 37th Intelligence Bureau Centenary Endowment Lecture on Monday.

Amit Shah

Senior Naxal leader Prabhakar Rao held in Chhattisgarh

The Hindu Bureau
RAIPUR

A senior Naxal leader, carrying a reward of ₹25 lakh on his head, was arrested by the police in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh on Sunday.

Prabhakar Rao, alias Balmuri Narayan Rao, 57, was in charge of logistics supply, mainly weapons, to the Maoist cadres in the conflict zone of Bastar, the police said in a statement. He was also the in-charge of Mobile Political School or MOPOS in the active North Sub Zonal Bureau of Maoists. These schools instill the ideology and even provide basic literacy to new recruits in the Maoist organisations. Rao has been associated with the Maoist organisation for 40 years.

A senior police officer said Rao's arrest was a major development because it would disrupt a well-established supply network, as Rao was a close associate of top Maoist leaders in Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Chhattisgarh. He said a veteran Maoist out of the MOPOS would adversely impact indoctrination, a more crucial aspect for the security forces.

It will give a significant boost in curbing Naxal activities in the area, said the officer.

On the arrest, the officer said that for the past few days, the police had a tip-off about Rao's activities in Kanker district and he was arrested in the blockade operation conducted by the police under the Antagarh police station area of Kanker district on Sunday. He did not reveal the further details of the operation citing confidentiality.

The police statement added that Rao was the cousin of top Naxal leader Ganapati.

11 detained for a year on ship off the Odisha coast released

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

More than a year after remaining confined aboard a ship anchored in the high seas off Odisha's Paradip coast following the seizure of cocaine valued at ₹220 crore, 11 of the 21 crew members of *MV Debi* have been released.

The sailors had been stranded onboard as the Indian Customs Department continued its investigation.

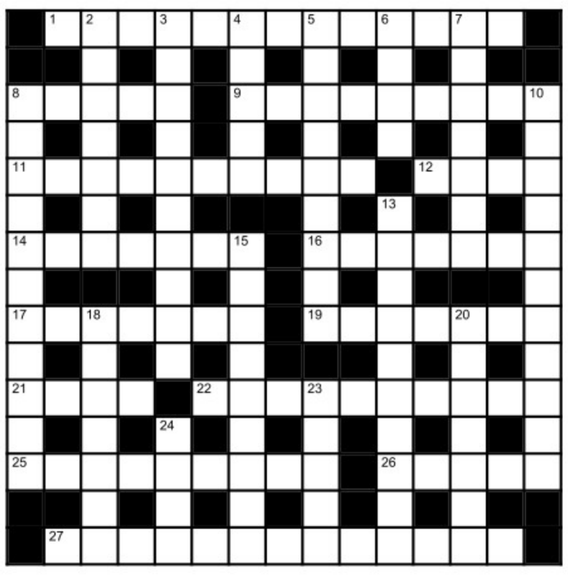
As per the Customs, the 11 crew members, including six Vietnamese nationals, were allowed to disembark the ship. They will have to comply with the regulations of the immigration department. The Asia Pacific Shipping Company, a Vietnamese firm that owns the Panama-registered vessel, will have to ensure proper maintenance of the ship with 11 new crew members.

TH CROSSWORD + 14364

(set by Dr. X)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Plug of TV set remained loose (13)
8 Surprises mother, finally cuts long hair (5)
9 / 2 Seem promising but ultimately disappoint with tale for detective novel (7,2,7)
11 Raw food consumed in a puerile manner (10)
12 Lounge in flames! Save boy (4)
14 Act foolishly, repent getting drunk at premiere (7)
16 Sore about husband cuddling secretary, start to take brave course of action (7)
17 Musical instrument over keel-shaped structure (7)
19 Party hosted by gal on fancy boat (7)
21 Parched? Relief to drink water finally (4)
22 Fearless guards taunt criminals at centre to engage in a decisive gunfight (5,2,3)
25 Enthralled by demure American on trip (9)
26 Stopped in English retro joint to have a little drink (5)
27 What welder might do to arouse sudden anger (4,6,3)

Down

2 See 9 Across
3 A seedy sot's going berserk around island - be careful! (4,4,2)
4 Revolting drunkard tackling couple of fine upper-class people (5)
5 Join forces with heroin-smuggling rascal (9)
6 Fantasy of steamy threesome (4)
7 Northern rogue in a rave, delivering ultimately pure ecstasy (7)
8 Match price to secure revolutionary diamonds for top collector (11)
10 Generous doctor! He operated without remuneration finally (4-7)
13 Popularity of new dinner sets (10)
15 The rat scurried into apartment over unsafe structure (9)
18 Folk tale character acting upset about protecting immature girl (3,4)
20 Egg-shaped cavity in gemstone, not soft (7)
23 Renovate retreats surrounding lake, becoming more decrepit (5)
24 Wish hot guy removes top (4)

SUDOKU

	3	1	9		4			
		2		3	1			
7	9							
	1				9			
3	8						4	6
			8				2	
							7	5
			5	4		6		
			7		6	4	9	

No.SS6379 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	A	G	G	L	O	M	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	
U		O		U		I		I		R		V		A
B	O	A	T	S	W	A	I	N		I	B	E	A	M
O		T		T		S		G		U		R		E
A	S	S	A	Y		M	U	S	K	M	E	L	O	N
T		K				A		I		V		Y		D
S	H	I	V	E	R			D	A	I	S			
		N		N		C		E		R		S		
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A		A		G		P		B				R		O
L	O	R	D	M	A	Y	O	R		A	W	A	R	E
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G	H	O	S	T		D	O	G	C	O	L	L	A	R
N		Y		I		I		A		F		I		Y
	C	O	N	C	A	T	E	N	A	T	I	O	N	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	5	9	1	8	2	7	3	4
8	4	7	6	3	9	2	5	1
2	3	1	5	7	4	9	8	6
4	7	2	8	6	3	5	1	9
3	1	8	9	5	7	4	6	2
9	6	5	4	2	1	3	7	8
1	2	6	7	4	5	8	9	3
5	9	3	2	1	8	6	4	7
7	8	4	3	9	6	1	2	5

FAITH

Christ's certitude on mercy

Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It is believed that the saviour, Lord Jesus Christ, through his expiatory and redemptive suffering, paid for the sins of the world. The Holy Bible proclaims that God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son, said Prof. Kumool Abbi.

In his teachings, Jesus emphasises the importance of love, peace, humanism, compassion and forgiveness. He proclaims that those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the pure in heart and the peacemakers, the persecuted are blessed.

The redeemer stated the importance of being meek, loving, kind, humble and ethical. He taught that to be meek is not to be submissive, passive or weak. To be non-violent is rather being powerful and not to retaliate and offer the other cheek is a divine quality. He stated that 'come to me all those who are burdened'. Thus he reassured us of the eternal certitude, mercy and promise of the love of God. He had come to comfort the meek, the afflicted, oppressed and wretched. He assured the weary, the lost, those who struggled to cope with sorrow by his own suffering. He benevolently showed us how to bear our cross, our trials and tribulations and resign to the will of the Lord. He showed us that true love lay in surrender and acceptance of suffering and surrender to the will of the Lord. Thus Jesus Christ through his birth and death assured us of hope, salvation and promise of the eternal love of the Lord. Through his life and death he taught us to cope with sorrow and suffering.

INBRIEF

Retail inflation for farm, rural workers eases in November

Retail inflation for farm workers and rural labourers slid to 5.35% and 5.47% in November compared with 5.96% and 6%, respectively, in October. The All-India Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL) and Rural Labourers (CPI-RL) registered a rise of 5 points each in November 2024, reaching levels of 1,320 and 1,331, respectively, the Labour Ministry said. The CPI-AL and CPI-RL were 1,315 points and 1,326 points, respectively, in October 2024. PTI

Wipro names Ranjita Ghosh as global chief marketing officer

IT company Wipro said it has appointed Ranjita Ghosh as its new Global Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), effective February 1 next year. Ms. Ghosh takes the chair from Laura Langdon, who has decided to explore career opportunities outside Wipro, a company statement said. Previously CMO of Wipro's Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa (APMEA) strategic market unit, Ms. Ghosh will now lead all marketing activities for Wipro across its geographies. PTI

Honda, Nissan aim at closing merger talks in June: source

Honda and Nissan may unveil a pact to explore a merger by setting up a joint holding company, a person familiar with the matter told *Reuters*, with the aim of reaching a deal by June 2025. The consolidation would create the world's third-largest auto group by vehicle sales after Toyota and Volkswagen as legacy carmakers face growing challenges from Tesla and China rivals. Honda has a market capitalisation of more than $40 billion and Nissan about $10 billion. REUTERS

'MFN not to hit India-EFTA pact'

The Switzerland government's decision to suspend the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status will not delay ratification and implementation of the four-nation EFTA-India Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

On track: MFN decision does not negatively hit investments from Switzerland to India, the Swiss government said. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

The Swiss decision to suspend the most favoured nation clause in the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement will not delay the ratification and implementation of the already signed trade agreement between India and the EFTA bloc, Switzerland has said.

The Swiss government has suspended the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status, which could potentially impact Swiss investments in India and lead to higher taxes on Indian companies operating in the European nation.

India and the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) signed the pact, officially dubbed as TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement), in March. Its members are Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

The agreement is yet to be implemented.

"No, the decision will not delay the ratification and implementation of EFTA-India TEPA," the Embassy of Switzerland in India said in a response to PTI queries on the matter.

The decision does not negatively hit investments from Switzerland to India.

"The current suspension from the Swiss side of the application of the MFN clause under the protocol to double taxation agreement between Switzerland and India does neither affect trade ties between the two countries nor Swiss investments in India," it said.

India and the four-nation European bloc signed a free trade agreement under which New Delhi received an investment commitment of $100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products like Swiss watches, chocolates and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties.

In 2023-24, India's imports from Switzerland stood at $21.24 billion against $1.52 billion exports, leading to a huge trade deficit of $19.72 billion. India got about $10.72 billion in foreign direct investments from Switzerland between April 2000 and September 2024.

'ICAI panel probing alleged auditing lapses in Byju's case'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI president Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal said its disciplinary committee is investigating alleged auditing lapses at edutech firm Byju's.

However, he did not divulge specific details being looked at. The matter related to Byju's has been referred to the disciplinary committee by the disciplinary directorate and investigations are going on, he told the media.

Specific details such as whether the directorate has prima facie found any violations were not disclosed by him.

Responding to queries, Mr. Agarwal also said the directorate has powers to either close a matter or recommend it for the consideration of the committee. Byju's matter has been sent to the committee, which is investigating it, he added.

In March this year, Mr. Agarwal had said ICAI found gross negligence on the part of the auditors of Byju's and the matter was referred to the Financial Reporting Review Board (FRRB) for punitive actions on the auditors concerned.

FRRB had referred the matter to the disciplinary directorate. Byju's has been facing multiple headwinds, including financial and legal woes. In October, the Supreme Court set aside the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's verdict that stopped insolvency proceedings against the edutech firm.

Sensex, Nifty end 5-day losing streak

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

India's benchmark stock indices broke a five-day losing streak that had marked its worst week in two-and-a half years, on Monday, riding on strong global cues.

The S&P BSE Sensex gained 498.58 points, or 0.64%, to close at 78,540.17 led by gains in heavyweight, IT and banking stocks. The NSE Nifty gained 166 points, or 0.7%, to 23,753.45 points. However, NSE's cash market volumes were 22% lower vis-a-vis last 10-day average and lowest since October 11.

The top Sensex gainers included ITC (2.07%), Tech Mahindra (1.68%), HDFC Bank (1.63%), IndusInd Bank (1.58%), Reliance (1.33%) and Titan (1.16%).

"We believe non-directional activity is likely to continue in near future; hence, level-based trading would be ideal for day traders," said Shrikant Chouhan, head, equity research, Kotak Securities.

"The Nifty Small cap 100 index completed 50% retracement of entire rise seen from November bottom (17367) to December top (19716) and is at strong support," said Devarsh Vakil, deputy head, retail research, HDFC Securities.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	MONDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	78,540	0.64
US Dollar	85.11	-----
Gold	78,700	-----
Brent oil	72.22	-----

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2338.95	-6.00
Adani Ports	1191.80	9.35
Apollo Hosp	7265.10	13.40
Asian Paints	2279.20	-3.15
Axis Bank	1079.15	7.30
Bajaj Auto	8768.45	-18.80
Bajaj Finserv	1563.40	-6.25
Bajaj Finance	6866.70	18.45
Bharat Elec	294.35	3.50
Bharti Airtel	1586.90	8.80
BPCL	289.10	0.05
Britannia Ind	4704.35	6.25
Cipla	1476.05	4.00
Coal India	382.95	0.95
Dr Reddys Lab	1341.35	-2.30
Eicher Motors	4750.55	16.05
Grasim Ind	2526.20	37.50
HCL Tech	1903.00	-8.35
HDFC Bank	1801.00	29.50
HDFC Life	622.55	-1.25
Hero MotoCorp	4272.60	-67.35
Hindalco	634.15	11.50
Hind Unilever	2338.90	5.00
ICICI Bank	1296.80	8.40
IndusInd Bank	945.70	16.25
Infosys	1924.30	2.15
ITC	474.25	9.60
JSW Steel	937.05	19.70
Kotak Bank	1745.35	1.80
L&T	3640.50	10.65
M&M	2909.30	2.95
Maruti Suzuki	10822.00	-79.05
NestleIndia	2151.60	-11.90
NTPC	333.65	0.40
ONGC	240.85	3.75
PowerGrid Corp	315.30	-0.50
Reliance Ind	1222.30	17.00
SBI Life	1405.30	4.70
State Bank	821.15	9.15
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2882.90	5.65
Sun Pharma	1814.60	5.75
TataConsumerProduct	902.75	13.30
Tata Motors	722.20	-1.85
Tata Steel	141.71	1.03
TCS	4158.30	-12.00
Tech Mahindra	1712.40	26.35
Titan	3396.95	40.70
Trent Ltd.	6946.00	114.45
UltraTech Cement	11472.60	49.80
Wipro	307.90	2.70

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 23

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	84.92	85.24
Euro	88.29	88.63
British Pound	106.58	106.99
Japanese Yen (100)	54.16	54.37
Chinese Yuan	11.63	11.68
Swiss Franc	94.79	95.15
Singapore Dollar	62.59	62.83
Canadian Dollar	58.99	59.23
Malaysian Ringitt	18.90	19.00
Australian Dollar	53.10	53.31

Source:Indian Bank

Adani to buy plane MRO firm Air Works

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Adani Defence Systems & Technologies Ltd. (ADSTL) has signed a share purchase pact to acquire 85.8% stake in Air Works, India's largest private sector maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) company at an enterprise value of ₹400 crore, as per an exchange filing.

"Creating a presence in the MRO sector is a commitment to building an integrated aviation services ecosystem that strengthens the backbone of India's aviation infrastructure," Jeet Adani, director, Adani Airports, was quoted as saying in a statement.

The group manages seven top-tier airports, including Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Lucknow which, together, account for 25% of passengers and 33% of air cargo in the country.

Established in 1951, Air Works Group has network presence across 27 cities with almost 1,500 staff.

It customers include aviation OEMs, commercial airlines, military, business aviation companies and lessors. It services 50 types of aircraft.

Switzerland's TIL to invest ₹20,000 crore in Vadhvan Port

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) said it signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Terminal Investment Ltd. (TIL) for constructing Vadhvan Port Project Ltd. (VPPL) in Maharashtra.

TIL will invest an estimated ₹20,000 crore for the development of the Vadhvan Port and the surrounding ecosystem.

TIL, based out of Switzerland, has a diverse portfolio of container terminals, located at key ports on the world's major shipping routes, providing access to developed and developing markets.

"This partnership not only reflects the confidence of global investors in India's maritime sector but also ensures integration of cutting-edge technology, sustainable practices and world-class infrastructure," said Unmesh Sharad Wagh, chairman, JNPA and CMD, VPPL.

How to tax popcorn? India's formula sparks outrage against GST system

Reuters
NEW DELHI

India's move to tax popcorn differently based on its sugar or spice content has drawn criticism from the Opposition and sparked social media outrage, with two former government economic advisers questioning the tax system introduced in 2017.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, chaired by the Finance Minister and including State representatives, announced that non-branded popcorn mixed with salt and spices would attract a 5% GST, pre-packaged and branded popcorn 12%, and caramel popcorn, categorised as a sugar confectionery, 18%.

The differential rates come into effect immediately, ending confusion over rates as popcorn was taxed differently across States.

Explaining the rationale behind the decision to tax caramel popcorn at 18%, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that any product with added sugar is taxed differently.

The announcement, however, sparked a social media storm on Sunday, with Opposition politicians, economists and supporters of PM Narendra Modi's government criticising the move and others creating memes and poking fun.

"Complexity is a bureaucrat's delight and citizens' nightmare," previous Chief Economic Adviser K. V Subramanian wrote on X. He questioned the rationale of the decision which will contribute minimally to tax revenue but inconvenience the citizens.

His predecessor, Arvind Subramanian, said "the folly is compounded because instead of at least moving in the direction of simplicity we are veering to greater complexity, difficulty of enforcement and just irrationality".

One widely circulated post on X showed an image of a branded "salt caramel" popcorn packet and said how it would send the taxman into a tizzy calculating the tax rate on it.

Jairam Ramesh, spokesman of the Congress party, said the 'absurdity of three different tax slabs for popcorn under GST only brings to light a deeper issue the growing complexity of a system that was supposed to be a Good and Simple Tax'. A Finance Ministry spokesperson and the GST Council Secretariat did not comment on the controversy.

THE HINDU
A Christmas gift like no other!
Gift your loved one a framed reprint of The Hindu's front page from a date of your choice.
https://newsth.live/framepage

MAGDEBURG

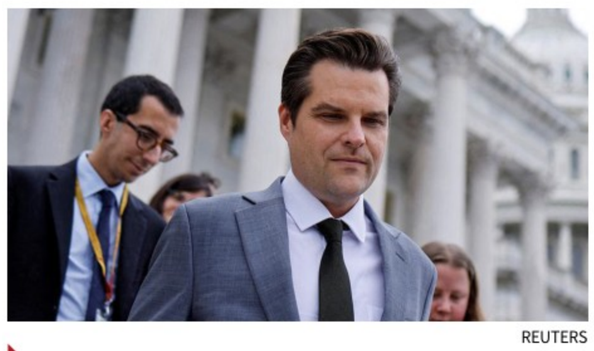
Far-right AfD holds march after Germany Christmas market attack

AP

Germany's far-right AfD party held what it called a "memorial" rally for five victims of a car-ramming attack on a Christmas market that has newly inflamed debate on migrant and security policy. Meanwhile, an anti-extremist initiative called "Don't Give Hate a Chance" was gathering nearby in the eastern city of Magdeburg. AFP

WASHINGTON

U.S. House report finds Matt Gaetz paid thousands for sex and drugs

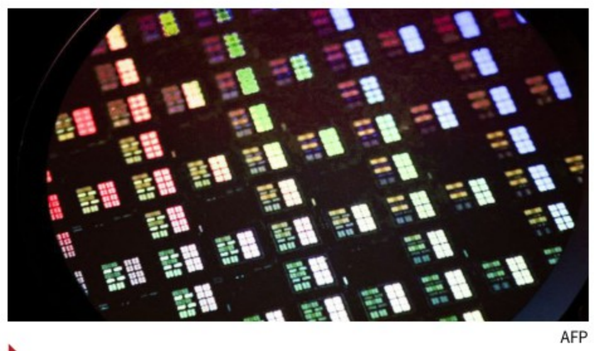


REUTERS

The U.S. House Ethics Committee has found that former Florida Congressman Matt Gaetz paid tens of thousands of dollars to women for drugs and sex, including with a 17-year-old girl. He had resigned from the House of Representatives last month after he was selected by Donald Trump to be Attorney-General. REUTERS

WASHINGTON

U.S. probes China chip industry on 'anticompetitive' concerns



AFP

The U.S. said it is opening an investigation into China's policies for its semiconductor industry, over concerns that Beijing is turning to "extensive anticompetitive and non-market means" to undermine other economies. It centres on foundational semiconductors — which go into everything from cars to medical devices. AFP

PARIS

French President announces fourth government of the year

AP

French President Emmanuel Macron named a new government, putting together a team under Francois Bayrou, his fourth Prime Minister of the year, to drag the second-largest EU economy out of political crisis. Mr. Macron named former Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne Education Minister in a new Cabinet under Mr. Bayrou. AFP

Some progress made on Gaza hostage deal, says Netanyahu

Israel PM's comments come a day after three Palestinian militant groups said a deal was closer than ever; Israeli strikes kill 58 people across Gaza during past 24 hours taking death toll to 45,317

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Same story: Rescuers inspect the carcass of a bus hit by an Israeli strike in the Mawasi area west of Khan Yunis city on Monday. AFP

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday that "some progress" had been made in negotiations to secure the release of hostages held in Gaza.

His comments in parliament come two days after three Palestinian militant groups said in a rare joint statement that a deal for a ceasefire in Gaza war and to exchange prisoners was "closer than ever."

In recent days, indirect negotiations between Israel and Hamas mediated by Qatar, Egypt, and the U.S. were held in Doha, rekindling hope of an agreement, more than 14 months into the Gaza war.

"Everything we are doing cannot be disclosed. We are taking actions to bring them back. I wish to say cautiously that there has been some progress, and we will not stop acting until we bring them all home," Mr. Netanyahu said in parliament.

On Saturday, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the leftist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine said in a joint statement that progress had been made to reach a ceasefire deal.

"The possibility of reaching an agreement (for a ceasefire and prisoner exchange deal) is closer than ever, provided the enemy stops imposing new conditions," the three groups said after they held talks in Cairo a day earlier.

Meanwhile, the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said on Monday that 58 people had been killed in the Palestinian territory in the past 24 hours, taking the overall war death toll to 45,317.

Bangladesh anti-graft panel to probe Russia-backed Rooppur nuclear project

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The Rooppur nuclear power plant is located 160 km from Dhaka and is one of the largest nuclear projects built by Russia. FILE PHOTO

An anti-corruption outfit in Bangladesh has initiated an investigation into the $12.65 billion Rooppur nuclear powerplant that is being constructed with Russian assistance. A statement from the Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh has alleged that around $5 billion financial irregularities have been discovered in the project that has been progressing for more than a decade.

'$5 billion'

The Anti-Corruption Commission said in its statement that "Bangladesh's ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, her son Sajeeb Ahmed Wazed Joy and niece Tulip Siddiq – who have embezzled $5 billion from overpriced $12.65 billion Rooppur nuclear power plant through various offshore bank accounts in Malaysia".

The commission further said that Tulip Siddiq who is a Labour MP in the United Kingdom and has been facing scrutiny in the U.K. since the fall of the government of her aunt Sheikh Hasina was involved in an elaborate scheme to launder money that involved her paternal uncle Tarique Ahmed Siddique.

Money laundering

"Tulip Siddiq and her family members are stakeholders in a company named Prochchaya which along with another entity Destinty Group had laundered $900 million," it has been alleged.

Earlier, *Sunday Times* in the U.K. reported that U.K. Treasury Economic Secretary Tulip Siddiq was questioned by the Cabinet Office's propriety and ethics team over allegations of siphoning around £3.9 billion from the Rooppur nuclear power plant project.

Ms. Siddiq's mother Sheikh Rehana is the younger sister of Sheikh Hasina and was evacuated by a Bangladesh military helicopter to India on August 5 when the Awami League government fell in Dhaka.

The under-construction Rooppur nuclear power plant is located 160 km from Dhaka and is one of the largest nuclear projects that Russsian nuclear major Rosatom has been building.

Philippines set to acquire U.S. Typhon missile system

Agence France-Presse
MANILA

The Philippines said Monday it planned to acquire the U.S. Typhon missile system as part of a push to secure its maritime interests, sparking warnings from China of a regional "arms race".

The U.S. Army deployed the mid-range missile system in the northern Philippines earlier this year for annual joint military exercises with its longtime ally, and decided to leave it there despite criticism by Beijing that it was destabilising to Asia.

Philippine Army chief Lieutenant-General Roy Galido told a news conference on Monday that the missile system would be "acquired because we see its feasibility and its functionality in our concept of archipelagic defence implementation".

"I'm happy to report to our fellow countrymen that your Army is developing this capability for the interest of protecting our sovereignty," he said, adding the total cost of the acquisition would depend on "economics".

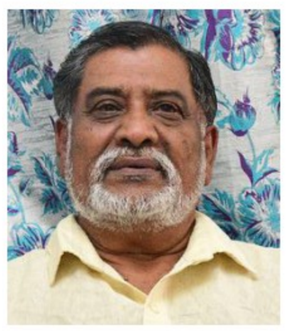
The presence of the U.S. missile launcher had angered Beijing, whose navy and coast guard forces have engaged in escalating confrontations in recent months with the Philippines over disputed reefs and waters in the South China Sea.

'Provocative move'

And on Monday, China swiftly condemned the decision to acquire the system as a "provocative and dangerous move" and warned it risked triggering an "arms race".

'Modi's silence on 13A due to lack of pressure from T.N., Sri Lankan Tamil parties'

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI



A. Varatharaja Perumal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on the 13th Amendment (13A) of Sri Lanka's Constitution, while addressing a press conference in New Delhi along with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, is a consequence of lack of pressure from Sri Lankan Tamil parties and political parties of Tamil Nadu, according to A. Varatharaja Perumal, former Chief Minister of the once-unified North-Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

Ever since the Amendment came into being in 1987, it had been the custom of Indian leaders to refer to 13A in their discussion with their Sri Lankan counterparts.

The 13th Amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution is an outcome of the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987 which envisaged a measure of autonomy to all the nine provinces of Sri Lanka including the Tamil majority Northern and Eastern provinces.

Past instances

During his first visit to Colombo in March 2015, Mr. Modi had called for an "early and full implementation" of the Amendment.

In July 2023, when then President Ranil Wickremesinghe came to New Delhi for talks, Mr. Modi expressed hope that Sri Lanka would fulfil its commitment to implement the Amendment.

In an interview over phone with *The Hindu* on Monday, the 71-year-old Varatharaja Perumal, who was Chief Minister between December 1988 and March 1990, said the predominant view among the Sri Lankan Tamil parties – be it the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Katchi (ITAK) or the Tamil Congress (ACTC) or any democratic Tamil political organisation – had been that no purpose would be served under the unitary nature of state.

'Unitary nature'

But, in reality, "it is impossible to change the unitary nature, a matter that G. Parthasarathi, a mediator sent by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi after the 1983 anti-Tamil riots in Sri Lanka, had understood quite early."

All proposals including the 1987 Accord were mooted between 1983 and 1987 for political settlement, considering the inevitability of the unitary system.

"The mindset, reflected by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) which had rejected all those ideas then, continues to be present," observed the former Chief Minister, who was a leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), an organisation that was in the anti-LTTE camp.

Even on instances when Sri Lankan Tamil parties spoke about 13A, they did not make any effort to implement it. Instead, they said it was the responsibility of India, the Indian government, to do the job, he said. Besides, none of the parties of Tamil Nadu had highlighted the need for 13A's full implementation. Those who spoke about the political settlement were raising the concept of Tamil Eelam, which the Indian government would never agree with, he added.

Genuine pressure

Moreover, "the government of India will act only when there is genuine pressure domestically," Mr. Varatharaja Perumal observed, while recalling that it was the presence of the domestic factor that paved the way for the involvement of the Indian government in addressing the Sri Lankan Tamil issue in the 1980s.

The former Chief Minister, who shuttles between India and Sri Lanka, pointed out that the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), the dominant constituent of the ruling National People's Power (NPP) in Sri Lanka, was once opposed to the system of provincial councils.

Over the years, it changed its position, saying that it was not against the councils, and, at the same time, it would not accept 13A.

"Its traditional stand is that the Amendment is not a solution to the basic problem. It has also been saying that Tamils themselves have not accepted it," Mr. Varatharaja Perumal said, expecting that the ruling coalition might strengthen local bodies.

AN AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTE OF GOVT. OF KARNATAKA
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE MEDICAL COLLEGE & RESEARCH INSTITUTE, BENGALURU.
Telephone: +91 8431186388 Email: sabvmcri@gmail.com

No.SABVMCRI/E-TENDER/LIFT/19/2024-25, Dated: 23.12.2024

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

e-Tenders is invited from interested eligible firms in accordance with KTPP Act for ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT (AMC) OF LIFTS INSTALLED IN BOWRING HOSPITAL, HSIS GOSHA, CHARAKA SUPER SPECIALTY HOSPITAL, BOYS AND GIRLS HOSTEL AND SABVMCRI.

1. Date of Commencement of Download of Tender Document from KPP Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**: **From 21.12.2024. 2.** Date of Online Queries: **26.12.2024 upto 05.30 p.m. 3.** Last Date and Time for uploading of e Tender in KPP Portal: **04.01.2025 upto 05.30 p.m. 4.** Date and Time of Online Opening of Technical Bids: **07.01.2025 at 10:30 a.m. 5.** Last Date of Site Inspection: **24.12.2024 upto 04.00 p.m.** For further details search in **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and if any further details are required in this regard. Please contact the Director Cum Dean / Assistant Administrator of this institute during working days. Tender Fee **DD of Rs.10000/-** for Director Cum Dean Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical College & Research Institute, Shivajinagar.

DIPR/CP/RO 3947/AAPL/2024-25

Sd/- DIRECTOR CUM DEAN SABVMCRI, BENGALURU

BEFORE THE REGIONAL JOINT DIRECTOR OF LAND RECORDS, BENGALURU DIVISION.
APPEAL NO. 24/2024 - 25

BETWEEN
Sri. M.K.Rajendra Pillai
Aged about 68 years, S/o Late Sri. Krishna Pillai, R/at Vrinbhavan, P.O. Panagadu, Kulanda District, Pathanamthitta, Kerela.
And
Represented by his G.P.A. Holder Sri. Suresh Babu M.N. S/o Late K.K. Narayan
....Appellant

1. The Deputy Director of land Records, DDLR Office, K.G Road, Ambedkar Veedhi, Sampangiramnagara, Bengaluru 560009.
2. Tahasildar, Bengaluru East Taluk, Diesel Loco Shed Road, Duravani Nagar, Krishna Rajapuram, Bengaluru - 560036.
3. Assistant Director of Land Records, Bengaluru East Taluk, Diesel Loco Shed Road, Duravani Nagar, Krishna Rajapuram, Bengaluru - 560036.
4. Sri. Nagaraj S/ o Erappa, Major
5. Smt. Jayamma, Major W/o Sri. Munishami Reddy
6. Sri. C. Babu Reddy, Major S/o Sri. Chikkaramaiah Reddy,
7. Smt. Gowramma /o Late Chikkaramaiahreddy @ Ramareddy,
7(a). Sri. Venkatesh Reddy C.R. S/o Ramareddy @ Chikkaramareddy, Aged about 60 years, R/at H.M.T. Layout, 8th Main Road, Bengaluru - 32.
8. Sri. Ramareddy, Major S/o Late Sri. Munishami Reddy
9. Sri. Lakshman Reddy, Major S/o Late Sri Munishami Reddy
10. Sri. Dasharath Reddy, Major S/o Late Munishami Reddy
11. Sri. Sadashiva. K.S, Major S/o Late Sri. Shankarappa
12. Sri. K.M. Mallikarjuna, Major
13. Sri. Shivaraj V. Patil, Major S/o Sri. V.B. Patil
14. Sri. P.K. Jayachandra Reddy, Major S/o Sri. Krishnareddy M.P. @ Krishnappa M.P.
15. Sri. P.K. Somashekar Reddy, Major S/o Sri. M.P. Krishnareddy
16. M/s Nambiar Builders Pvt Lmited, Represented by its authorized Signatory Mr. Ratheesh Nambiar,
17. Sri. B.M. Venkataswamy, Major S/o Munireddy
18. Smt. Balamani Jayaprakash, Major S/o Sri. Jayaprakah Menon
19. Sri. Thimmareddy, Major S/o Sri. Muniswamy Reddy
20. Sri. Jayanna, Major S/o Sri. K. Krishnappa

Sl. No. 3 to 19 (except 6a)
Are residents of Sulikunte village, Varthur Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru.
....RESPONDENTS

NOTICE/SUMMONS TO THE DEFENDANTS

To,
Defendant address

Whereas the above named Appellant instituted a appeal against you Set aside the order dated 3-9-2024 in Appeal No. 186/2022-23 passed by the Deputy Director of Land Records, Bengaluru District and allow the appeal with interest of justice and equity.

Your hereby summoned to appear before this court on 2-1-2025 at 3 p.m in person or through advocate/pleader to answer questions to the same. Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as ex-parte.

Given under my hand & seal of the court, this 12th day of December 2024.

ADVOCATE FOR APPELLANT
B.N. Prakash
Lawyers Inc.,
No. 15/2, V.S. Raju Road, 12th Block
Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020

By order of the court
Sd/-
Asst. Registrar

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Joint Director (Animal Husbandry)
Ground Floor, Annex-3, N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002.

No. JD(AH)/PR-446/2024-25 Date: 23.12.2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through GoK KPP Portal)

The Joint Director (Animal Husbandry), BBMP, Bengaluru on behalf the Chief Commissioner, BBMP invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in BBMP or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Govt. Organisations for the following works.

Sl.No.	Name of the Work
1	Collection of Entrance Fees and Slaughter Fees for large animals (Buffalos above 13 years only) at Civil Meat Production and Processing Centre, Tannery Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru. **RFP No. BBMP/2024-25/SE1080/CALL-2.**

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 23.12.2024. (2)** Last date & time for uploading online queries : **26.12.2024 upto 5.00 pm. (3)** Date of Pre-bid meeting : **26.12.2024 at 5.00 pm at the above office. (4)** Last date & time for uploading of tenders: **07.01.2025 upto 5.00 pm**. **(5)** Date of opening of technical bids : **08.01.2025 at 5.10 pm.** Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or from KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Joint Director (Animal Husbandry), BBMP

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
No.8, "Samparka Soudha", Dr. Rajkumar Road,
Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560 010. Telefax : 080-22024000
e-mail : mdkrdcl@gmail.com, cekrdcl@gmail.com Website: http://www.krdcl.in

No. KRDCL/IFB/2024-25/18 Dated: 23-12-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION (through KPP Portal)

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) invites bids from agencies having experience in respect of following works as per the requirement of Bangalore City Traffic Police on Quality cum Cost Based Selection (QCBS) tender basis in two cover system as detailed below:

Name of the Work: "Consultancy services for Project Management Unit (PMU) for works of Bengaluru City traffic police under Bengaluru City Road Safety Authority and Traffic management project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police (BTP)". **Amount put to tender (Rs.in Crore) :** 2.95 (exclusive of GST). **Earnest Money Deposit (Rs.in Lakhs):** 2.96 through kpp-portal. **Period of Completion (including monsoon):** 48 months for supply & installation, testing, commissioning and training.

Interested applicants may download bidding documents from the KPP portal **www.kpp.karnataka.gov.in** and submit the bids and EMD (electronically) through KPP portal only.

The Calendar of events for various activities is as follows: (a) The last date and time for submission of queries is : **07-01-2025 upto 17:30Hrs.** The applicants may submit their queries through electronic mail: **cekrdcl@gmail.com (b)** Pre-bid meeting will be held on **08-01-2025 at 16.30 Hrs. in office of the Joint Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru City Police, No.5, Traffic Management Centre, 2nd Floor, Infantry Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. (c)** The last date and time for submission of bids is **21-01-2025 up to 17:30 Hrs. (d)** Date and time of opening of Technical bids is : **23-01-2025 at 11:00 Hrs.**

*Please note henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through Newspapers and further changes will be updated only on Karnataka Public procurement portal Website.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer
KRDCL, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/YC/3925/2024-25

SETBACK

Shami won't take any part in Border-Gavaskar Trophy

FILE PHOTO

Mohammed Shami has been ruled out of the last two Border-Gavaskar Trophy Tests in Melbourne and Sydney following swelling in his left knee. The BCCI medical team explained that the pacer would require more time before getting fit to play Test cricket, considering the volume of bowling needed of him.

MAIDEN CALL-UP

Mumbai all-rounder Kotian to join Indian Test squad Down Under

GETTY IMAGES

Mumbai's spin-bowling all-rounder Tanush Kotian has received a call-up to join the Indian squad in Melbourne for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Kotian, who bowls off-spin and bats right-handed, will leave for Australia on Tuesday. The 26-year-old's departure to Australia follows R. Ashwin's retirement last week.

BIG CONCERN

India's bowling attack lacks ability to take 20 wickets: Pujara

AP

The Indian team in Australia lacks a bowling attack that is good enough to take 20 wickets in a Test, Cheteshwar Pujara said on Monday and called it the side's biggest concern heading into the last two matches of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "The Indian bowling is looking a little weak," Pujara told Star Sports.

WAY FORWARD

Katich's advice to Australian batters on tackling Bumrah

AP

Former cricketer Simon Katich has advised Australian batters to concentrate on rotating the strike and maintaining a solid defence to succeed against the peerless Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah. Katich noted that since Bumrah rarely bowls loose deliveries, the Australians must be strategically good in their approach.

Pant has the X-factor to leave his imprint on Australian shores again

Quick hands, sharp reflexes and a fluidity at the crease remain the India wicketkeeper-batter's allies as he looks to increase his yield with the willow

INDIA IN AUS

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

Australia was the terrain that shaped Rishabh Pant's halo. His unbeaten 89 that helped India snatch a terrific win at Brisbane's Gabba in 2021, is the stuff of legend. Ajinkya Rahane's men won that Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, and seemingly there was no looking back for Pant.

Down Under yet again, Pant, in the intervening years has dealt with a debilitating car accident and has made a mind-boggling comeback. So much of India's fortunes rest on Pant's ability with the bat, besides his skill-sets behind the wickets. The southpaw can scatter the finest of attacks and ruin well-laid fielding plans.

He is the maverick, who brooks no resistance. In the current series, there was this lovely moment one morning when he sidled behind Adam Gilchrist and closed the latter's eyes with his hand. A blinded Gilchrist turned around and soon the wicket-keeping club closed ranks. Hugs and words were exchanged before Pant left to join his teammates.

It is in this world of the Gilchrists and M.S. Dhonis, Pant has galloped in with a witty remark, an athletic catch and muscular shots. In the current series, striding in at five, Pant has had scores of 37, 1, 21, 28 and 9. While India and Australia are locked in a 1-1 stalemate, and with two Tests to play, a lot will rest on how Pant can increase his yield with the willow.

The destroyer: Pant can scatter the best of attacks. GETTY IMAGES

In a quandary

So far, Pat Cummins and his fellow speedsters have tried to cramp Pant, either bowling into him, or attempted to lure the batter with a wider line. The short ball with some fielders placed in an arc from the square-leg fence to fine-leg, has also been pressed into service. Often walking in with an anaemic score, Pant has been lost between the twin stools of aggression and caution.

It doesn't help that below him, the others haven't rallied around while Nitish Kumar and the last-wicket heroics of Jasprit Bumrah and Akash Deep, have been the exceptions. Pant often has to paper the cracks while also factoring in a lower-order that may not necessarily turn up with gumption.

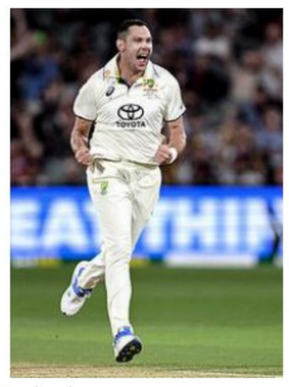
The link between Virat Kohli at four and skipper Rohit Sharma at six, Pant is expected to be this left-handed X-factor, charting new ways for his team. Quick hands, sharp reflexes and a fluidity at the batting crease remain Pant's allies. But having established himself over the years, he has also become a subject of intense scrutiny and every perceived vulnerability has been analysed to the hilt.

In this tour so far, more than Pant, it has been Nitish's turn to be the surprise factor. He has clattered fours and offered handy runs. With K.L. Rahul and Bumrah being the exemplars of consistency through this tour, India will prosper if Pant and the rest join the party.

The Boxing Day fourth Test here at the Melbourne Cricket Ground followed by the final one in Sydney, offer fresh roads for Pant to leave his imprint yet again in these hostile Australian shores. And India waits.

Abbott all praise for Aussie speedsters

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE



Boland. AFP

It takes a man, who has gone through an emotional wringer, to strike the pose of a philosopher. Sean Abbott has endured a lot in life ever since that fatal bouncer to Phillip Hughes a decade ago. The seamer, who is part of the current Australian Test squad, was practical about his chances while speaking to the media at the Melbourne Cricket Ground here on Monday.

Asked about the absence of Tests in his resume, Abbott calmly replied: "If I am not getting any games it's a good thing for the team because it means we are at full strength. I am obviously here as cover for any of the bowlers but I am enjoying it." He then added: "While it is my dream to play Tests for Australia, I am pretty realistic that the guys that are playing are doing a pretty amazing job."

Besides lauding the trio of Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood, Abbott praised other speedsters too: "I would probably throw Scotty (Boland) in there and make it four. Every time he comes in, he does well. A lot of batters around the country breathed a sigh of relief when he came into the Test team."

Whatever be the circumstances, Abbott wants to be prepared: "Just be ready to go. I have done the white-ball stuff and I put my best foot forward. It's the same, no matter what format you play." And as for a rival legend, the seamer declared: "Watching him (Jasprit Bumrah) as a fellow fast bowler, it seems that with every ball he could take a wicket. He swings it both ways, has accuracy and pace. He ticks all the boxes."

Curator expects the pacers to have a ball

What's in store? Page reckons the fast bowlers will relish the track for the Boxing Day Test. AFP

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

A cold wind hustled through the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). A mild drizzle ensued and on the fringes of the turf, stood the man, who tends to the venue's surface, and is clued into the dynamics of soil and its interplay with moisture, sun and grass. A jacket and cap in place, Matt Page held court on Monday afternoon.

In the lead-up to the fourth Test here from Thursday, the MCG curator expressed his satisfaction over how the pitch has shaped up. "We have been happy with what we have served up in the last couple of years and we don't see any reason to change that. Seven years ago, the pitch was quite flat. We sat down as an organisation and said we want to create more exciting Tests, so we leave more grass on now, and that brings the bowlers into it a bit more, but the surface is still good for batting once the new ball goes off. We have been running at six millimetres of grass and we will monitor that," Page said.

As for the spinners, he added: "It doesn't really break up for spin. Look at our long format games over the last four or five years and they were probably more seam friendly. We are never going to be as quick as Perth and Brisbane, but over the last few years we have managed to get some pace in it. If you are a fast bowler, you probably will get excited. It will seam around the whole game with the new ball."

Asked about the variable bounce encountered on pitches that Rohit Sharma's men trained on, Page explained: "We prepare the practice pitches three days before the game and if India had turned up today, they would have got fresh ones. It is standard procedure." And that hopefully would end the debate over why India did not get fresh ones for nets.

Herath reckons Washington will play a bigger role in post-Ashwin era

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

To be in the shadows and then grab your slice of sunshine is never easy. Rangana Herath precisely did that. For a large part of his early career, the former Sri Lankan left-arm spinner had to deal with the greatness of Muttiah Muralitharan, and then he carved out his own path.

Having bowed out in 2018 with 433 Test wickets, Herath has been a busy presence in the international coaching realm. He had a stint with Bangladesh and now has a flexible role with New Zealand. Having shifted base to Australia, Herath said: "I moved to Australia with my family, about two-and-a-half years ago. Considering all the angles, this is one of the best places to live. I do a bit of one-on-one coaching here."

Not a full-time job

Explaining his coaching stints, Herath said: "With New Zealand, I am not doing a full-time job. Basically, they hire me for the subcontinental games." And how big was New Zealand's 3-0 sweep in the Test series in India?

"I played many years for Sri Lanka, and we never won a Test in India. So, winning 3-0 series on their soil, that's special. If they (New Zealand) can win one game in India, that will be a good achievement, that was the initial thought. That first innings of India when they got 46 in Bengaluru, after that the thinking was if we can win one game, then why can't we win another game?"

Making a difference: Washington has made a big impression on his return to the Indian Test team. GETTY IMAGES

Looking at the current state of Sri Lankan cricket, Herath said: "I am so happy that the guys are giving their 100 per cent. Sri Lanka is doing well at the moment and I am sure they will continue with the same momentum.

"(Coach) Sanath (Jayasuriya) is a character, who wants to win every game and he knows the kind of language that Sri Lankan players need to be addressed."

Gazing across the seas, Herath praised R. Ashwin: "He is such a clever guy and a very smart bowler, I would like to congratulate him and wish him for his future. I thought Washington (Sundar) bowled brilliantly in the series against New Zealand and he played the first game in Perth here as well. He has a long way to go. He can bat as well, and after Ashwin, I think Washington will do most of the work.

"And Jaddu (Ravindra Jadeja) is completely different. He tends to go a bit faster and is a bit of a back of a length as well. He keeps the batters under pressure and takes wickets."

Natural ability

Speaking about the quirky talent that Sri Lanka is famous for, Herath elaborated. "Sri Lanka always produces different kinds of guys, mystery bowlers like Ajantha Mendis, we have Matheesha (Pathirana) now, before that we had Lasith Malinga.

"We play street cricket in Sri Lanka, and in backyards. You can't produce these cricketers with coaching, it has to come naturally. I am sure there will be a few other cricketers like this in the future as well."

Rookie Konstas reveals his gameplan

Up for the challenge: Konstas says he likes to take the game on and put pressure on the bowlers. AFP

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

An air of expectation swirled around Sam Konstas. The 19-year-old was part excitement, and part nervous energy. Understandable as he is all set for his international debut in the fourth Test commencing at the Melbourne Cricket Ground here on Thursday.

In a chat with the media on Monday, he was asked about whether he saw tapes of Jasprit Bumrah. Dealing with the verbal bouncer, the youngster had his counter ready: "No, not really. I watched a bit but I am just trying to be in the moment and hopefully I will get the opportunity of playing him."

Later when pressed on probable strategies against the Indian spearhead, the opener offered a straight bat: "I do (have plans), I am not going to say what it is, but it is just about trying to put pressure back on the bowlers." Once Australia's optional nets started, Konstas practised what he preached and essayed a range of shots against Marnus Labuschagne's throwdowns and occasional spin.

Cutting back to the press-conference, Konstas gave a hat-tip to his idol Shane Watson: "I admire Shane Watson a lot. He is a legend of the game. (Like him) I like to take the game on and put pressure on the bowlers and hopefully I can do that this week if I (make my) debut."

Reacting to the big break while he is yet to turn 20, the batter quipped: "This is an amazing opportunity at my age. Pat Cummins and the group have welcomed me in and this feels like family. This is a dream-come-true and I feel pretty relaxed and am living in the moment."

Raghu to take on Mithun in the summit clash

The former stuns No. 1 seed Sathish while the latter beats Rounak; Devika faces off against Shriyanshi for the big prize in women's section after getting past Adarshini and Tasnim

NATL. BADMINTON

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Big scalp: Raghu knocked out top seed Sathish in straight games to reach his maiden National final. K. MURALI KUMAR

Karnataka's M. Raghu entered his maiden men's singles final at the Senior National badminton championship following a convincing 21-17, 21-17 victory over top seed K. Sathish Kumar of Tamil Nadu at the KBA courts here on Monday.

In the summit clash, the 26-year-old will meet Statemate Mithun Manjunath – representing Railways – who beat Chhattisgarh's Rounak Chouhan 21-15, 21-13. For Mithun, it will be a chance to win his second National title after his success two editions ago (2022 held in February 2023).

The women's final will be between Haryana's Devika Sihag and Telangana's Shriyanshi Valishetty who beat Tamil Nadu's N.B. Adarshini Shri and Gujarat's Tasnim Mir respectively.

It was sweet revenge for Raghu after having been ousted by Sathish in just 28 minutes just over a week ago at the Odisha Masters BWF Super 100.

The local boy played a clean first game, erased a four-point deficit twice in the second before triumphing when Sathish sent a forehand drive long.

The results (semifinals):
Singles: Men: M. Raghu (Kar) bt K. Sathish Kumar (TN) 21-17, 21-17; Mithun Manjunath (Rly) bt Rounak Chouhan (Chg) 21-15, 21-13.

Women: Devika Sihag (Har) bt N.B. Adarshini Shri (TN) 21-13, 21-10; Shriyanshi Valishetty (Tel) bt Tasnim Mir (Guj) 25-23, 21-13.

Doubles: Men: P. Naveen & V. Lokesh (TN) bt Ashith Surya & Vaibhaav (Kar) 17-21, 21-12, 22-20; Arsh Mohammad (UP) & Sanskar Saraswat (Raj) bt Suraj Goala (Asm) & Dhruv Rawat (Utk) 14-21, 21-18, 21-19.

Women: Arathi Sara Sunil (Ker) & V.S. Varshini (TN) bt Aparna Balan (Pet) & Simran Singhi (Mah) 21-17, 21-14; Priya Devi Konjengbam (Mnp) & Shruti Mishra (UP) bt Shikha Gautam & K. Ashwini Bhat (Kar) 22-20, 16-21, 21-12.

Mixed doubles: Rohan Kapoor (Del) & G. Ruthvika Shivani (Pet) bt Deep Rambhiya & Akshaya Warang (Mah) 21-16, 21-17; Ayush Agarwal & Shruti Mishra (UP) bt Shivam Sharma & Poorvisha S. Ram (RBI) 21-16, 21-19.

Fit-again Mithun eager to get career back on track

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

On the mend: Mithun is making a return after being laid low by back spasms over the last 12 months. K. MURALI KUMAR

In August 2023, Mithun Manjunath was in sporting dreamland. He was ranked just outside the top-40, had just beaten the then World No.7 and former World Champion Loh Kean Yew, and was bought for a handsome ₹14.5 lakh at the Grand Prix Badminton League (GPBL) auction. Two months after that, he was part of the Indian team that won a historic team silver at the Asian Games.

In the 12 months since that high, Mithun has seen his fortunes nosedive. From a career-high rank of No. 33 in January 2023, he is now 79. From March to October, he was troubled by back spasms which ensured that he won back-to-back main draw matches on the BWF World Tour just once all year – at the Thailand Masters way back in January-February.

It is only now that he is picking up the pieces. Last month at the CM Trophy India International in Raipur, he stood first. On Monday, watched on by the legendary Prakash Padukone, he entered the singles final of the Senior Nationals, a title he won in early 2023. Competition may not have been of the highest standard, but the winning feeling is what athletes crave for.

"I know that I have the game and I know how to play," Mithun told *The Hindu*. "I just need to bounce back".

Pain and recovery

The back injury was the first serious crisis in Mithun's career. "We didn't know what to do," he recollected. "I was actually okay. But the moment I got to a tournament, the pain would come back. I was doing everything, fitness, rehab... but I still had that injury. But once I started my recovery at a slow pace, it was better. Now I am okay and my mindset is good".

At 26, one may feel that it is too late for Mithun to shine on the international stage, but he remains singularly focused.

"That [GPBL] bid amount showed by value. I got the highest bid. I was a bit worried when the GPBL did not happen, but it showed how people portrayed me and how they wanted me in the team. Now, I just want to return to where I was and improve further".

Kambli with a fan who admitted him to hospital. PTI

Kambli hospitalised but in stable condition

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Former India cricketer Vinod Kambli has been admitted to a hospital due to deterioration in his health.

The 52-year-old was brought to the hospital on Saturday by one of his fans, who also owns the hospital in Bhiwandi's Kalher area in Thane district, and his condition was said to be stable, even though the exact reasons for his hospitalisation could not be ascertained.

Kambli, who played 17 Tests and 104 ODIs for India between 1993-2000, had recently attended the inauguration of coach Ramakant Achrekar's memorial at the Shivaji Park here.

Women In Blue will look to sustain momentum

Shayan Acharya
VADODARA

Smriti... in sublime form. VIJAY SONEJI

India, after the thumping win in the series opener, will look to pull away further when it meets West Indies in the second ODI at the Kotambi Stadium on Tuesday.

The Women in Blue have performed well over the last few days, having clinched the T20I series 2-1 against the West Indies followed by a dominant show in the first ODI with a 211-run win.

While Smriti Mandhana has been in sublime form - hammering five consecutive fifties across formats - the seasoned campaigners like Jemimah Rodrigues, Harleen Deol and the captain Harmanpreet Kaur have also chipped in with crucial knocks in the last game, helping India put up a mammoth total. On a sluggish black-soil surface, the home side will be hoping to tick all the boxes, again.

As overcast conditions prevailed on Monday, dew is expected to play a role once again. However, India will be banking on its India's fast bowling unit, spearheaded by Renuka Singh.

Match starts at 1.30 p.m.

Shahu wins air rifle gold

Podium finish: Dhanush, champion Shahu and Yash Vardhan. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sports Bureau

Shahu Tushar Mane beat Dhanush Srikanth by 0.1 point to clinch the men's air rifle gold in a spectacular climax in the 67th National shooting championship at the Madhya Pradesh Academy in Bhopal on Monday.

Shahu led by 0.1 point before the last two shots, and Dhanush matched him on the last two shots with identical 10.6 and 10.5, for an unbelievable finish.

A determined Rudrankksh marched to the junior gold later with a strong performance in the final, as he shot 254.9 to beat Abhishek Shekar by 4.5 points. Himanshu managed to climb to the bronze.

Himanshu was eventually able to assert his class in the youth final as he beat Yash Pandey by 2.2 points for the gold.

Meanwhile, in the skeet competition at the Dr. Karni Singh Range in Tughlakabad, Fatehbir Singh Sheergill and Munek Battula topped the men's field with 123 out of 125. Bhavtegh Singh Gill and Divyaraj Singh took the next two spots in the final with 122, while Olympians Mairaj Ahmad Khan and Angad Vir Singh Bajwa made the cut with 121.

In women's skeet, Olympian Raiza Dhillon was a class apart as she shot 122, following rounds of 25, 25, 24, 23 and 25, to be four shots ahead of World Cup medallist Ganemat Sekhon. Yashasvi Rathore, Vanshika Tiwari, Asees Chhina and Shivani Raikwar were the others to make the final.

The results: Air rifle: Men: 1. Shahu Tushar Mane 252.3 (631.3); 2. Dhanush Srikanth 252.2 (631.1); 3. Yash Vardhan 230.0 (631.1).
Juniors: 1. Rudrankksh Patil 254.9 (630.9); 2. Abhishek Shekar 251.4 (629.0); Himanshu 229.9 (632.5).
Youth: 1. Himanshu 253.0 (632.5); 2. Yash Pandey 250.8 (628.2); 3. Abhinav Shaw 229.6 (628.2)
Sub-youth: 1. Naraen Suresh 629.2; 2. Ansh Dabas 628.3; 3. Yash Pandey 628.2.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
E-Mail-sencrwangul@yahoo.co.in. Ph.no.06764-236404
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, ANGUL
No. 3074// Dt. 21/12/24 //
Cancellation of Tender for Road work
The tender for Road works invited vide this office Tender Call Notice No.2749 dt.14.11.2024 (Bid Identification No. Road Online-AGL- 12 / 2024-25) by the Procurement officer, Chief Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Angul is hereby cancelled.
Chief Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Angul.
O-997 : OIPR-25180/11/0026/2425

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, EASTERN CIRCLE (R&B), BALASORE
e-mail:- seec_bls@rediffmail.com
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. CCEEC-10/2024-25
No.: 4725 / Dt.: 20.12.2024

Nature of work	Roads Works
Number of works	1 No Roads Work
Amount put to Tender	Rs.7,83,58,657/-
Class of Contractor	"A" Class & "Special" Class
Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal	Dt.04.01.2025 at 10.00 AM
Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal	Dt.18.01.2025 up to 05.00 PM
Date of opening of bid	Dt.19.01.2025 at 11.00 AM
Name & address of the Office inviting bid	Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B), Balasore.

The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "http//tendersodisha.gov.in". All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.
Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B), Balasore
B-793: OIPR-34026/11/0007/2425

OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR AND DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, BALANGIR (ODISHA)
(District Child Protection Unit)
In front of Collectorate, Balangir-767001, Phone No-06652-231886, Email-dcpo.bolangir.od@nic.in
Notification No 1224/DCPU, Balangir, Odisha, Date 21.12.2024
It is hereby informed through this Notification that, following 02 nos. of girls child have been residing at the Specialised Adoption Agency(SAA), Palaceline, Balangir who have no parents/family. During their staying at the SAA, Balangir nobody of the children have visited or inquired about the Children. Hence, this advertisement is published for tracing out of biological parent, guardian, legal claimant (if any) to claim the children. The biological parent, guardian, legal claimant (if any) of the following children are required to claim within 30 days of publication of this advertisement in the Office of the District Child Protection Officer, DCPU, Balangir (Mobile No.8249481400, email: dcpo.balangir.od@nic.in) / Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee, Balangir (Mobile No. 7638968212, email: cwcbolangir@gmail.com), Superintendent & Programme Manager, SAA, Balangir (Mobile No.9437241894) with proper and authenticate proof/documents. After completion of 30 days, no claim will be entertain and action deem proper shall be taken as per provisions made under Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of the Children) Act, 2015 & its amendment Act, 2021 for the best interest of the children. Detail particulars of the children are given below;

Sl. No.	Details Particulars	Photograph
02	SIKHA :(Girl child, aged Below 01 month, DOB-26.11.2024), Body color-wheatish, Height-37cm and Weight-2.100 Kg) Rescued from the village of Mursing under Deogaon Police Station, Balangir as abandoned child on dated 29.11.2024 and since then the child has been residing at Specialized Adoption Agency, Balangir vide Case No. 897, dated-29.11.2024 of the CWC, Balangir.	
03	BEENA :(Girl child, aged Below 01 month, DOB-01.12.2024), Body color-white, Height-36cm and Weight-2.360 Kg) Rescued from the premises of the District Head Quarter Hospital, Balangir as abandoned child on dated 04.12.2024 and since then the child has been residing at Specialized Adoption Agency, Balangir vide Case No. 900, dated-04.12.2024 of the CWC, Balangir.	

Sd/- Collector & District Magistrate, BALANGIR
g-135 OIPR-33036/11/0011/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER & BASIN MANAGER,
MAHANADI, BRAHMANI & BAITARANI SYSTEM, CHANDIKHOLE
E-mail ID : cembbschandikhole@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
E - Procurement Notice No:- CE&BM, MBBS 04 OF 2024-25
Bid Identification No: CE&BM, MBBS JPD 02 OF 2024-25
The Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Mahanadi, Brahmani & Baitarani System, Chandikhole on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on-line percentage rate tender through e-procurement in double cover system.
Table-1 : Details of Critical Dates, details of work, Bid Security

Pkg. No.	Name of works	Approx. Tender Cost	Class of Contractor	Bid Security / EMD-(on-line) (in INR)	Cost of tender document (on-line) - (in INR)	Period of Completion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Protection to Scoured Bank Bodak Tintor Saline Embankment on Baitarani Left from Bodak to Muan.	Rs.1236.30 Lakh (Excluding G.S.T)	'A' & 'Special' Class	Rs.12,36,400/-	Rs.10,000/-	18 (Eighteen) Calendar Months

Table-2 : e-Procurement Details

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender on-line for bidding		Date of Seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender		Place of Opening
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Mahanadi, Brahmani & Baitarani System, Chandikhole	CE&BM, MBBS JPD 02 OF 2024-25	Dt.30.12.2024 at 10.00 hours	Dt.20.01.2025 up to 17.00 hours	Dt.30.12.2024 to 17.01.2025 at Office during office hours	Dt.21.01.2025 at 11.00 Hours	To be intimated after evaluation of Technical Bid	Office of Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Mahanadi, Brahmani & Baitarani System, Chandikhole

Further details can be seen from the Govt. Web site www.tendersodisha.gov.in
*Other Terms & conditions can be seen from the Government website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
*The Corrigendum/ cancellation of Tender, if any, will be uploaded and can be seen from the above website only.
Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, MMBS, Chandikhole
A-774: OIPR-32415/11/0004/2425

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only through kpp portal)
BWSSB invites tenders in Two cover system from eligible tenderers for the following works.
Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-560 009.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Amount put to tender / EMD Amount
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE(D)TA(D&QA)/2949/2024-25		Dt: 20.12.2024
1	Work of construction of commercial Complex Building to the BWSSB Property at Lavelle Road, Bangalore.	Rs.359.40 Lakhs / Rs.5,40,000/-
2	Work of construction of sub division office at Machalibetta, Bangalore.	Rs.145.37 Lakhs / Rs.2,18,100/-

For the above works last date for submission of completed tender document is on 09.01.2025 up to 16.00 hrs. and the Technical bids will be opened on 10.01.2025 at 16.00 hrs.
Sd/- Chief Engineer (Design & QA)
The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.
DIPR/CP/3934/AKAR/2024-25

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan Race Course Road
Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383 website : www.kiadb.in
No.IADB/ENGG/PMC/EPTND-EP-13/1891/2024-25 Date: 23.12.2024
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR PROVIDING PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY SERVICES.
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)
KIADB is inviting tenders under Quality Based Consultancy System (QCBS) as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Consulting Firms under two cover system for the following works:
Name of the works : (1) Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Design, Construction, Testing, Commissioning including Operation & Maintenance for five (5) years of Infrastructure Works of MMLP block at Phase-1 of Dharwad Industrial node at Dharwad taluk and district on turnkey basis. **(2)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Supplying, laying, testing and commissioning of dual water supply pipe line networks for supplying potable & recycled water and UGD Network with suitable pipe lines, construction of chambers, etc. at Phase-3 of Dharwad Industrial node at Dharwad Taluk and District. **(3)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout including formation of road etc., at Sector-7 of Phase-3 of Dharwad Industrial Node at Dharwad Taluk and District. **(4)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout Including Formation of Road, at Aliyabad Industrial Area, 3rd Phase, Vijayapura District (Package-2). **(5)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout Including Formation of Road, at Aliyabad Industrial Area, 3rd Phase, Vijayapura District (Package-1). **(6)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout Including Formation of Road, at Karajaga Village Sector-1 in Kanagala Industrial Area, 2nd Phase Hukkeri Taluk, Belagavi District. **(7)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout Including Formation of Road, at Karajaga Village Sector-2 in Kanagala Industrial Area, 2nd Phase Hukkeri Taluk, Belagavi District. **(8)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout Including Formation of Road, at Karajaga Village Sector-3 in Kanagala Industrial Area, 2nd Phase Hukkeri Taluk, Belagavi District.
The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **10.01.2025** upto **4.00 pm.**
Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the E-Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**
Sd/-
DIPR/CP/3930/Zen/2024-25 Chief Engineer-2, KIADB Bengaluru

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A BG-BGE

INBRIEF

Manipur women retain the National football crown

Manipur rode on Asem Roja Devi's 55th-minute strike against Odisha in the final to retain the senior women's National football championship, for the Rajmata Jijabai Trophy, in Narainpur (Chhattisgarh) on Monday. It was Manipur's 23rd title out of the 29 editions played, while Odisha suffered its sixth defeat in seven finals, all against Manipur.

Ayub continues merry run as Pakistan sweeps South Africa

Saim Ayub hit his second century of the series as Pakistan completed a clean sweep over South Africa in the third ODI at the Wanderers in Johannesburg on Sunday. The opener made a sparkling 101 off 94 balls. Heinrich Klaasen smashed 81 off 43 balls for South Africa – but the host was beaten by 36 runs, chasing a revised target of 308. The match was reduced to 47 overs a side because of rain.

The scores: Pakistan 308/9 in 47 overs (Ayub 101, Mohammad Rizwan 53, Babar Azam 52, Salman Agha 48, Kagiso Rabada 3/56) bt South Africa 271 in 42 overs (Klaasen 81, Corbin Bosch 40 n.o.); *Pakistan won by 36 runs via DLS method*; **PoM & PoS:** Ayub.

NorthEast United thumps Hyderabad FC in the ISL

NorthEast United FC beat Hyderabad FC 5-2 in an Indian Super League fixture at the GMC Balayogi Stadium in Hyderabad on Monday.

The result: HFC 2 (Correia 5, 12) lost to NEUFC 5 (Fernandez 18, 61, Rodrigues og-54, Ajaraie 73, Saji og-78).

Dabang Delhi seals a spot in semifinal with big win

Dabang Delhi confirmed the second semifinal spot of PKL 11 after a 41-35 victory over Gujarat Giants and extended its unbeaten run to 15 matches in Pune on Monday. Patna Pirates beat Telugu Titans 41-37 in the other match of the day.

LIVE TELECAST

India Women vs West Indies Women: 2nd ODI, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 1.30 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m.

Smaran smashes a century, guides Karnataka home against Pondicherry

Pacer Vidyadhar dismantles opposition batting line-up with a four-wicket haul; skipper Arun Karthick's half-century goes in vain

HAZARE TROPHY

Anish Pathiyil
AHMEDABAD

A four-wicket haul by pacer Vidyadhar Patil and an unbeaten maiden List A century by R. Smaran helped Karnataka over the line against Pondicherry in a Vijay Hazare Trophy Group C match here on Monday.

Smaran (100 n.o., 87b, 10x4, 3x6) combined for a 113-run stand with vice-captain Shreyas Gopal (40, 59b, 3x4) to help Karnataka seal victory by three wickets in a tricky chase.

Three wickets from debutant Vijai Raja reduced Karnataka to 78 for four, but Shreyas and Smaran ensured that the runs kept flowing with continuous rotation of strike.

Smaran displayed his array of attacking shots once the innings steadied as both batters hit six fours in the space of seven balls to wrest complete control of the chase.

Keeping his cool

Despite a flurry of wickets falling with the finish line in sight, Smaran kept his calm, recording his maiden hundred off the final ball and ensuring the team completed the chase in 40.5 overs to secure its second consecutive win.

Earlier, Karnataka's opening bowlers made the best use of the conditions after putting Pondicherry into bat, skittling the top order within ten overs.

None of Podicherry's top-five managed to get into double figures with Vidyadhar Patil picking up four in his first spell, forcing the batters to play at the deliveries in the channel outside off.

Captain K.B. Arun Karthick (71, 106b, 3x4, 2x6) and all-rounder Aman Khan (45, 65b, 3x4, 1x6) forged a solid partnership to rebuild the innings before Aman fell to a well-directed bouncer from V. Vyshak.

Arun then dropped anchor, content with taking the game deep while others around him looked for their shots. The skipper went on to complete his half-century before being run out in the penultimate over as his side posted a total of 211 for nine which proved to be inadequate.

Power-packed: Smaran slammed 10 fours and three sixes to set up the win.
FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY - SECOND ROUND SCORES

Group-A

Jaipur: Manipur 253/7 in 50 overs (Kangabam Priyojit 43, Johnson Singh 69) lost to Jharkhand 255/2 in 28.3 overs (Ishan Kishan 134, Utkarsh Singh 68); **Toss:** Manipur; **Points: Jharkhand 4(8), Manipur 0(0).**
Goa 271/7 in 50 overs (Ishaan Gadekar 83, Darshan Misal 75) lost to Haryana 275/2 in 44.4 overs (Himanshu Rana 101, Ankit Kumar 128 n.o.); **Toss:** Haryana; **Haryana 4(4), Goa 0(4).**
Odisha 267/5 in 50 overs (Swastik Samal 40, Kartik Biswal 76 n.o., Aasirwad Swain 58) lost to Assam 271/5 in 50 overs (Rishav Das 73, Sumit Ghadigaonkar 47, Sibsankar Roy 66); **Toss:** Assam; **Assam 4(4), Odisha 0(0).**
Gujarat 280 in 48.1 overs (Aarya Desai 106, Umang Kumar 87, Agrim Tiwari 3/39) bt Uttarakhand 275 in 49.4 overs (Yuvraj Chaudhary 50, R. Samarth 82, Aditya Tare 47, Priyajitsing Jadeja 4/50); **Toss:** Uttarakhand; **Gujarat 4(8), Uttarakhand 0(4).**

Group-B

Mumbai: Services 204 in 48 overs (Mohit Ahlawat 61, Pradeep Dadhe 3/38, Satyajeet Bachhav 3/36) lost to Maharashtra 205/1 in 20.2 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 148 n.o.); **Toss:** Maharashtra; **Maharashtra 4(8), Services 0(4).**
Andhra 262/7 in 50 overs (K.S. Bharat 64, Y. Sandeep 80 n.o.) lost to Rajasthan 266/1 in 43.4 overs (Ram Chouhan 120 n.o., Mahipal Lomror 134 n.o.); **Toss:** Rajasthan; **Rajasthan 4(4), Andhra 0(4).**
Himachal Pradesh 322/7 in 50 overs (Prashant Chopra 134, Rishi Dhawan 82 n.o.) bt Sikkim 227/7 in 50 overs (Nilesh Lamichaney 42, Lee Yong Lepcha 41 n.o., Apporav Walia 3/42); **Toss:** HP; **HP 4(8), Sikkim 0(0).**
Navi Mumbai: Railways 332/7 in 50 overs (Suraj Ahuja 112, Sahab Yuvraj Singh 71, Upendra Yadav 77 n.o.) bt Meghalaya 200/8 in 50 overs (L. Sangma 47, Yuvraj Singh 3/34); **Toss:** Meghalaya; **Railways 4(4), Meghalaya 0(0).**

Group-C

Ahmedabad: Arunachal Pradesh 131 in 33.5 overs (Pranav Karia 4/44) lost to Saurashtra 132/2 in 9.3 overs (Sheldon Jackson 45 n.o., Jay Gohil 41); **Toss:** Arunachal; **Saurashtra 4(4), Arunachal 0(0).**
Pondicherry 211/9 in 50 overs (Arun Karthick 71, Aman Khan 45, Vidyadhar Patil 4/27) lost to Karnataka 214/7 in 40.5 overs (R. Smaran 100 n.o., Shreyas Gopal 40, Vijai Raja 3/40); **Toss:** Karnataka; **Karnataka 4(8), Pondicherry 0(4).**
Nagaland 216/8 in 50 overs (Dega Nischal 77, Chetan Bist 69 n.o., Raghu Sharma 3/33) lost to Punjab 217/5 in 34.5 overs (Abhishek Sharma 41, Anmolpreet Singh 55, Anmol Malhotra 45 n.o., Jagadeesha Suchith 3/38); **Toss:** Punjab; **Punjab 4(8), Nagaland 0(0).**
Hyderabad 169 in 38.1 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 64, Aravelly Avanish 52, Atharva Ankolekar 4/55, Ayush Mhatre 3/17) lost to Mumbai 175/7 in 25.2 overs (Shreyas Iyer 44 n.o., Saranu Nishanth 3/42); **Toss:** Mumbai; **Mumbai 4(4), Hyderabad 0(4).**

Group-D

Vizianagaram: Jammu & Kashmir 221 in 44.2 overs (Vivrant Sharma 63, Paras Dogra 42, Auqib Nabi 45 n.o., Nachiket Bhute 3/33, Harsh Dubey 3/49) lost to Vidarbha 225/4 in 37.1 overs (Karun Nair 112 n.o., Jitesh Sharma 43); **Toss:** Vidarbha; **Vidarbha 4(4), J&K 0(2).**
Chandigarh 322/5 in 50 overs (Shivam Bhambri 152, Tushar Joshi 59, Ankit Kaushik 51 n.o.) bt Chhattisgarh 299/4 in 46.3 overs (Sanjeet Desai 54, Amandeep Khare 121 n.o., Gagandeep Singh 51); **Toss:** Chhattisgarh; **Chhattisgarh 4(6), Chandigarh 0(2).**
Visakhapatnam: Mizoram 141 in 34.3 overs (Mohit Jangra 70, Shivam Mavi 5/29, Mohsin Khan 3/34) lost to Uttar Pradesh 144/1 in 20.3 overs (Abhishek Goswami 47, Aryan Juyal 86 n.o.); **Toss:** UP; **UP 4(6), Mizoram 0(2).**

Group-E

Hyderabad: Delhi 211 in 48.4 overs (Sarthak Ranjan 41, Anuj Rawat 78) bt Madhya Pradesh 132 in 37.1 overs (Harsh Gawli 42, Subhranshu Senapati 55, Navdeep Saini 4/37, Hrithik Shokeen 3/26); **Toss:** MP; **Delhi 4(4), MP 0(4).**
Baroda 403/4 in 50 overs (Ninad Rathva 136, Parth Kohli 72, Krunal Pandya 80 n.o., Vishnu Solanki 46) bt Kerala 341 in 45.5 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 65, Ahammed Imran 51, Mohammed Azharuddeen 104, Akash Singh 3/70); **Toss:** Kerala; **Baroda 4(8), Kerala 0(0).**
Bihar 226/8 in 50 overs (Mangal Mahrour 106, Manisankar Murasingh 3/27) lost to Tripura 228/5 in 48.2 overs (Bikramkumar Das 77, Sridam Paul 34, Bishal Ghosh 43 n.o.); **Toss:** Tripura; **Tripura 4(4), Bihar 0(0).**

Salah happy to end his career anywhere

EURO LEAGUES

Agencies
LONDON

Mohamed Salah dropped another hint that his future could lie away from Liverpool as the Egypt star said he would be happy "wherever I am going to end my career" after starring in Sunday's 6-3 demolition of Tottenham.

"It's great to achieve that at such a big club, but the most important thing is that we won the game. Wherever I am going to end my career I am happy about it," said Salah.

The 32-year-old is the first Premier League player to bag at least 10 goals and 10 assists before Christmas. Meanwhile, Kylian Mbappe said he had bounced back from hitting rock bottom after helping Real Madrid thrash Sevilla 4-2 on Saturday to move second in LaLiga above stuttering rival Barcelona.

The results: Serie A: Atalanta 3 (De Ketelaere 34, 86, Lookman 45+1) bt Empoli 2 (Colombo 13, Esposito 57-pen); Monza 1 (Birindelli 22) lost to Juventus 2 (McKennie 14, Gonzalez 39).

LaLiga: Real Betis 1 (Isco 37-pen) drew with Rayo Vallecano 1 (Palazon 51).

KARNATAKA ROUND-UP

Aneeshwar stars in Karnataka's victory

Aneeshwar Gautam (85 n.o.) helped Karnataka defeat Goa in the BCCI men's under-23 State 'A' trophy match at Raipur.

The scores: Goa 180 in 45.3 overs (Bharat Kambli 49, Yash Kasvankar 39, Manvanth Kumar 3/27) lost to Karnataka 181/7 in 38.2 overs (Hadley Noronha 29, Aneeshwar Gautam 85 n.o., Manvanth Kumar 28, Pratap Singh 3/57).

Maharashtra women beat Karnataka

Maharashtra defeated Karnataka by three wickets in the BCCI senior women's one day trophy pre-quarterfinal match at Rajkot.

The scores (pre-quarterfinal): Karnataka 210 in 49.5 overs (Vrinda Dinesh 41, Veda Krishnamurthy 68, Ananya Hegde 29 n.o., A.A. Patil 5/39, M.R. Magre 3/37) lost to Maharashtra 212/7 in 47.2 overs (M.R. Magre 43, A.A. Patil 39, S.R. Mane 86).

Sahyadri HC posts win

BENGALURU: Sahyadri HC (Shivamogga) took out Belgaum District HA 6-3 in the KSHA B division hockey league here on Monday.

The results: Sahyadri HC 6 (Vignesh 9, 14, 23, 47, D.U. Srikanth 35, Raghavendra 44) bt Belgaum District HA 3 (Shashank Kurpe 31, V.T. Bhojroja 39, 41).

Easy for FC Bengaluru United

FC Bengaluru United cruised past Real Chikkamagaluru FC 5-1 in the BDFA Super Division football league here on Monday.

The results: MEG & Center FC 2 (C. Kipgen 16, Ayush 90) bt Parikrma FC 0; FC Bengaluru United 5 (Johny Kom 11, 69, O.P. Jerry 14, A. Tyagi 39, Rakesh Singh 61) bt Real Chikkamagaluru FC 1 (L. Khongsai 90).

Had a dream to be a GM when there was none in Asia: Torre

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Eugene Torre became Asia's first Grandmaster in 1974, two years after Bobby Fischer's historic victory in the World championship match against Boris Spassky. The Filipino living legend would go on to form a close friendship with Fischer, the most influential figure of all time in chess.

Torre was Fischer's second when the American played a sequel to his World title match with Spassky in 1992. In a famous game in 1976, he defeated the reigning World champion Anatoly Karpov. In 2016, at the age of 64, he won the bronze medal, playing on the third board for the Philippines.

At 73, his affair with chess continues.

"Back in my time, the Grandmasters from Europe, the United States, or the Soviet Union would treat the Asian players as their easy victims," Torre told *The Hindu* in Singapore recently. "But I had this dream to become a Grandmaster when there was none in Asia, and in fact, not many even outside."

Torre. P.K. AJITH KUMAR

In order to fulfil his dream, he travelled to Europe. "My family was very supportive of me, as would be the case of Viswanathan Anand years later," he says. "Because we had no tournaments in Asia, and it was inconceivable to campaign in Europe for a long time. Thankfully, I had an arrangement with a local newspaper, which would pay me $300 a month for my reports. Stay was cheap in Madrid then."

He did not make his Grandmaster norms on that European tour, but he got his title at the 1974 Chess Olympiad in the French city of Nice. He also has fond memories of beating Karpov at home, the Marlboro-Loyola Kings tournament in Manilla.

"I had black pieces in that game, which was a Sicilian Richter-Rauzer variation, and I surprised him," Torres smiles. "I played good chess and he was virtually unbeatable those days."

Karpov had become the World champion after Fischer forfeited his crown. The American genius was a hero for Torre.

"When Fischer came as a guest of the Philippines in 1968, I was very young, and I just watched him," Torre recalls. "But in 1976, I came close to him, and then got an opportunity to work with him in 1992 for his match against Spassky in Yugoslavia".

Ayub's strike puts J&K in the quarterfinals

SANTOSH TROPHY

Sports Bureau
HYDERABAD

Jammu and Kashmir booked a quarterfinal berth with a 1-0 win against Rajasthan in the Santosh Trophy National football championship at Deccan Arena here on Monday.

J&K went into the match needing at least a draw to book a knock-out berth and managed to get all the three points while Rajasthan needed a win and a Manipur victory against Telangana.

After an intense battle, J&K broke the deadlock in the 74th minute thanks to Adnan Ayub's magic. The forward picked up a loose ball 35 yards from goal, drove towards the box, and let fly with his left foot. A diving Gaurav Kumar Singh could do little.

In the another match, Manipur took the lead in the 16th minute when a short ball was picked up on the left and Prabin Khangebam sent a low cross into the box. Kangabam Lammgamba Singh was at hand to slot it in.

Telangana fought back and scored the equaliser, when Mohammed Amaan's delightful spin and subsequent through ball was converted by Syed Imtiyaz Ahmed in the 40th minute.

Manipur was dominant in the second half and missed some scoring chances before Khullakpam Zahir Khan found a way in the 85th minute and sent in a left-footer into the bottom corner.

Shoraisham Sagar Singh added a third minutes later to compound Telangana's agony and cement Manipur's win.

The results:
J&K 1 (Adnan Ayub 74) bt Rajasthan 0; Manipur 3 (Kangabam Lanngamba Singh 16, Khullakpam Zahir Khan 85, Shoraisham Sagar Singh 87) bt Telangana 1 (Syed Imtiyaz Ahmed 40); Bengal 1 (Badudeb Mandi 46) bt Services 0.

Dutch star Janssen eyes glory with TN Dragons

HIL

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

Talking with captain Amit Rohidas and engaging with other Indian young Indian players, drag-flick specialist Jip Janssen was a picture of confidence and composure on his first day of training at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium here on Sunday.

'*Upar Upar*' (in Hindi)," he shouts, with a wry smile, to his players, signalling them to play the aerial ball.

The 27-year-old defender, a part of the Netherlands men's team, that won a gold medal in the Paris Olympics, is one of the key players for Tamil Nadu Dragons in the Hockey India League (HIL) beginning in Ranchi and Rourkela on January 28.

Janssen, roped in by the Dragons for ₹54 lakh, is the second-highest paid foreign player after Gonzalo Peillat (Germany) for Hyderabad Toofans (₹68L).

New beginnings: Janssen is looking to shine in the HIL. R. RAGU

It was a different matter the Indian players who commanded significant bids with Harmanpreet Singh (Soorma HC) fetching ₹78 lakh, Abhishek joining the Bengal Tigers for ₹72 lakh, and Hardik Singh signing with the UP Rudras for ₹70 lakh. Despite this, the Dutch defender felt that the top Indian players going for higher amounts was justified. Janssen said: "They (Indians) are amazing players. And besides you can only play five international players. So therefore, good Indian players are very worthy."

According to Janssen, he is here to win the HIL for Tamil Dragons. "I don't have any expectations. I'm just here to enjoy. And to have fun with the guys who train hard and hopefully win this thing," he said.

The Netherlands created history after it bagged a historic double when its men's and women's teams won a gold medal each at Paris Olympics.